

THE Spiritual Magazine.

NOVEMBER, 1875.

THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY AS TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

By GEORGE SEXTON, LL.D.

III.

II.—SOME FACTS THAT MAY HELP US TO A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING AS TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT UPON THIS SUBJECT.

There are several facts which, when taken into consideration, may help us to a better understanding of this question, and such as would perhaps serve to guide us to a conclusive opinion, even were the direct teachings of the Old Testament much less explicit than they are. Two or three of these we will briefly glance at.

1.—In discussing the question as to what were the views of the ancient Hebrews respecting the future life, we must not lose sight of the fact that the doctrine of immortality, in some form or other, has been held by almost all people, in all ages, and therefore, to suppose that the only race of men to whom an especial Revelation was given were ignorant of so important a fact, is to imagine a state of things opposed altogether to sound reason, and to what we may conceive to have been the objects and purposes of Inspiration. Although it is quite true that the knowledge of a future life is sometimes but faintly shadowed forth in the beliefs of ancient peoples, yet nothing is more certain than that it is almost universally to be met with in some form or other. Among the Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and even the barbarian nations, so deeply rooted in

* A Discourse delivered at Cavendish Rooms, London, on Sunday evening, July 11th, 1875.

human nature is the aspiration after another life, that we invariably find it breaking forth in some kind of shape; sometimes in a form rude, fantastic, and extremely absurd, but nevertheless so real that there can be no mistaking its character. It would seem, therefore, to be a universal instinct of humanity, springing up everywhere in the breast of man, and being closely allied with that spirituality of his nature which stamps him human and makes him a child of the Omnipotent Father. This doctrine, therefore, which, although in its fuller and more glorious sense was brought to light by the Gospel, we find distributed over all the ages, as a sort of dim shadow of the good things which were afterwards to be realised, it is impossible to suppose the ancient Hebrews could have been ignorant of, without doing violence to all our notions with regard to the purposes of Revelation, and the special end had in view in setting apart this peculiar people to be the favoured recipients of God's inspired truth. To imagine that they could be ignorant altogether of the knowledge of a future state, is really to suppose that, despite the Revelation which they received, they were less informed upon one of the most essential features of the Revelation itself than those peoples who had nothing to guide them but their own natural faculties; a supposition which it is difficult to see how anyone can entertain, who has bestowed any thought upon the subject.

2.—Amongst the ancient heathen nations there is hardly one to be named by whom the doctrine of a future life is more conspicuously set forth than by the Egyptians. Probably the greater number of the most intelligent classes of this people in ancient times held the doctrine of Metempsychosis; but at no period of their history do we find them entertaining materialistic opinions. Whatever may have been the object had in view in that process of embalming the dead, which with them reached so high a degree of perfection, one thing is clear, that they never lost sight of the doctrine of immortality. This is evident from a variety of facts brought to light by modern investigations into Egyptology, through which we have obtained clearer views regarding the opinions of the Egyptians on the question of a future life than we possess respecting much more recent and, generally speaking, much better understood nations. Alger remarks, in reference to this very question, "Three sources of knowledge have been laid open to us. First, the papyrus rolls, one of which was placed in the bosom of every mummy. This roll, covered with hieroglyphics, is called the funeral ritual, or book of the dead. It served as a passport through the burial rites; it contained the names of the deceased and his parents, a series of prayers he was to recite before the

various divinities he would meet on his journey, and representations of some of the adventures awaiting him in the unseen state.* Secondly, the ornamental cases in which the mummies are enclosed are painted all over with scenes setting forth the realities and events to which the soul of the dead occupant has passed in the other life.† Thirdly, the various fates of souls are sculptured and painted on the walls in the tombs in characters which have been deciphered during the present century.‡

Those mystic, stony volumes on the walls long writ,
Whose sense is late reveal'd to searching modern wit.

Combining the information thus obtained, we learn that according to the Egyptian representation the soul is led by the god Thoth into Amenthe, the infernal world, the entrance to which lies in the extreme west, on the farther side of the sea, where the sun goes down under the earth. It was in accordance with this supposition that Herod caused to be engraved on a magnificent monument erected to his deceased wife, the line, 'Zeus, this blooming woman sent beyond the ocean.'§ At the entrance sits a wide-throated monster, over whose head is the inscription, 'This is the devourer of many who go into Amenthe, the lacerator of the heart of him who comes with sins to the house of justice.' The soul next kneels before forty-two assessors of Osiris, with deprecating asseverations and intercessions. It then comes to the final trial in the terrible Hall of the Two Truths, the approving and the condemning, or, as it is differently named, the Hall of the Double Justice, the rewarding and the punishing. Here the three divinities Horus, Anubis, and Thoth, proceed to weigh the soul in the balance. In one scale an image of Thmei, the goddess of Truth, is placed; in the other a heart-shaped vase, symbolizing the heart of the deceased, with all the actions of his earthly life. Then happy is he

Who weighed 'gainst Truth, down dips the awful scale.

Thoth notes the result on a tablet and the deceased advances with it to the foot of the throne on which sits Osiris, lord of the dead, king of Amenthe. He pronounces the decisive sentence, and his assistants see that it is at once executed."|| Now how is it possible to conceive that the ancient Hebrews should have come into such very close proximity to the Egyptians as we know they did, without becoming acquainted with the views they entertained respecting the future state. Certain it is that

* *Das Todtenbuch der Ägypter*, edited with an Introduction by Dr. Lepsius.

† *Pettigrew's History of Egyptian Mummies*, chap. ix.

‡ Champollion's Letter, dated Thebes, May 16, 1829. An abstract of this letter may be found in *Stuart's Translation of Greppo's Essay on Champollion's Hieroglyphic System*. Appendix, Note N.

§ Basnage, *History of the Jews*, lib. ii., chap. 12, sec. 19.

|| *Critical History*, &c., p. 103.

they could not have intermingled in their daily life year after year with people who not only had definite conceptions regarding immortality, but who made that belief apparent in their funeral obsequies and in customs connected with the dead that were of daily occurrence without becoming acquainted with the fact that such a belief existed. The statement, therefore, made by certain classes of persons that the Israelites after their deliverance from Egyptian bondage were altogether ignorant of the doctrine of a future life is preposterous in the extreme. Sceptical of immortality it is possible to conceive them as having been, but uninformed respecting it they could not have been, after so many years' residence and in the midst of a nation with whom it was one of the most conspicuous forms of faith.

3.—There is very much weight to be attached to the view put forward by Dean Stanley on this subject, that if an absence of plain and definite teaching respecting immortality is met with in the Old Testament, it is due, not to the fact that the doctrine was not known, but rather to the circumstance that it was so universally believed in, and so generally understood that the inculcating it was superfluous. This view is strictly in keeping with our experience in modern times. Subjects about which there is no doubt are seldom spoken of, and doctrines universally received as true there is no necessity for teaching. I quote at length the passage from Dean Stanley bearing on this question, in order that you may judge of its full import. "The Jewish religion is characterised in an eminent degree by the dimness of its conception of a future life. From time to time there are glimpses of the hope of immortality. But for the most part it is in the present life that the faith of the Israelite finds its full accomplishment. 'The grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; . . . the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day.'*" It is needless to repeat here the elaborate contrast drawn out by Bishop Warburton in this respect between the Jewish Scriptures and the religions of Paganism. Nor need we adopt the paradoxical expedient by which from this apparent defect he infers the Divine legation of Moses. But the fact becomes of real religious importance, if we trace the ground on which this silence respecting the future state was based. Not from want of religion, but (if one might use the expression) from excess of religion was this void left in the Jewish mind. The future life was not denied or contradicted,—but it was overlooked, set aside, overshadowed by the consciousness of the living, actual presence of God himself. That truth, at least in the limited

* *Isaiah* xxxviii., 18, 19; *Psalms* xxxviii., 12.

conceptions of the youthful nation, was too vast to admit of any rival truth, however precious. When David or Hezekiah, as in the passages just quoted, shrank from the gloomy vacancy of the grave, it was because they feared lest, when death closed their eyes on the present world, they should lose their hold* on that Divine Friend, with whose being and communion the present world had in their minds been so closely interwoven. Such a sense of the overwhelming greatness and nearness of God, the root of feelings so peculiar as those which I have described, must have lain too deep in the national belief to have had its beginning in any later time than the epoch of Moses. It is the primary stratification of the religion. We should invert the whole order of the history, if we placed it amongst the secondary formations of subsequent ages."† As you will easily understand, I do not myself consider that there is such a paucity of teaching with regard to this question as even Dean Stanley seems to imagine, but in any case, whatever vagueness may be discovered about it is I think clearly explained by the suggestion which he throws out.

Taking these facts into consideration then, the evidence in favour of Old Testament immortality becomes overwhelmingly strong, and of such a character as no scepticism can refute or sophistry explain away.

III.—THE LIGHT THROWN UPON THE SUBJECT BY CHRISTIANITY.

Hitherto I have spoken of the Old Testament simply as a collection of ancient writings, and judged of the doctrines contained therein, as they would present themselves to the mind of a person who looked at them entirely apart from the light of Christianity, and even then we have seen the great truth of immortality perpetually beaming forth. But the Old Testament is not to be judged of after this fashion. We hold it to be a portion of an inspired volume, the contents of which can only be accurately ascertained by taking it as a whole. Not exclusively intended for Jews was that revelation of the earlier dispensation, but also to serve as an introduction to the later and more glorious religion which should include within its embrace all the nations of the earth. Old Testament writers gave forth their utterances as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and no doubt their teachings were especially adapted to the times in which they were spoken, but there was nevertheless lying unrecognised in the language used a deep and hidden meaning only to be made thoroughly manifest in a later and more glorious age. The

* Ewald, *Geschichte* ii., 121.

† *History of the Jewish Church*, Vol. I., p. 136.

Rationalist will, of course, contend that we have no right to interpret Old Testament records in the light of New Testament explanations, that each book ought to be judged of by itself, and that we ought to seek no aid in the elucidation of its meaning, except such as can be gathered from the circumstances existing at the time and in the place of its production, and likely to influence the mind of its author. From his point of view this is correct enough, no doubt, but from ours it is utterly at fault. I have however met him on his own ground, and judged of the teachings of the Old Testament as I should judge of the contents of any other volume, and having done this, I have a perfect right now to look at its doctrines in the light reflected upon them by Christ and His religion. There can be no doubt that very frequently the meaning of the utterances of the prophets of old was hidden, not only from the people whom they addressed, but even from themselves. Hence we find in the New Testament an interpretation put upon Old Testament Scriptures embodying a far deeper meaning than was ever seen in them by the people who lived in Old Testament times, and to whom they were spoken. Again and again do we meet with incidents in the life of our Lord which set forth the fact that something more than ordinary education and practical common sense was necessary to a right understanding of the Old Testament record. On one memorable occasion, after having predicted those frightful judgments that were to fall upon Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, He exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* And after His resurrection when He had explained to His disciples what had been written in the Scriptures respecting Himself, we are told that He "opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."† Here is the true method of interpreting the Old Testament. By this light alone can it be properly understood.

Now if we take New Testament interpretations of Old Testament passages, we shall find the doctrine of a future life in hundreds of instances, where otherwise we should search for it in vain. When God appeared to Moses at the burning bush, His language was, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;"‡ language which would seem to imply nothing more than the special protection of the Almighty of the persons named. But our Lord taught that in these very words the doctrine of the future life

* *Matthew* xi., 25, 26.

† *Luke* xxiv., 45.

‡ *Exodus* iii., 6.

was set forth, his interpretation of them in the following passage being clear and explicit:—"Now that the dead are raised even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead but of the living: for all live unto Him."* In the case of the rest pointed out to the early Israelites, it is spoken of simply as a promise of their future entrance into the favoured land of Canaan. Moses writes, "For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when He giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety."† The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews gives to this promise a far wider signification, including within it all who seek after a knowledge of Christ's truth, and making its realization to be not the ancient Palestine but the heavenly home prepared for all the chosen "people of God."‡ In the same way is explained, and by the same writer, the Old Testament statement that the Israelites were strangers§ and sojourners in the country through which they were passing to the more favoured land of promise, which is also shown to be typical of the pilgrimage through earth to the heavenly city, "whose builder and maker is God."|| Indeed we are especially told in this case that the full realization of the promise was not experienced by the people to whom it was first given, and that the language employed pointed unmistakably to the earthly path leading to the celestial home. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth."¶ Certain it is therefore that according to the interpretation of the New Testament the doctrine of a future life was unmistakably taught on almost every page of the Old. Many other passages might be quoted had I the time at my disposal for doing so, but these will suffice for the purpose. Here as well as everywhere else we learn that

'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter
And intimates eternity to man.

The Old Testament record from beginning to end bears conclusive testimony to the firm faith of the people amongst whom it originated in the great doctrine of immortality; a doctrine which is to be met with in some form or other in all ages and amongst all peoples. In Christianity of course we find this great truth brought to light in all the glory of its

* *Luke* xx., 37, 38.

† *Hebrews* iv., 9.

‡ *Hebrews* xi., 10.

† *Deuteronomy* xii., 9, 10.

§ *Genesis* xxviii., 4.

¶ *Hebrews* xi., 13.

fulness, shining out conspicuously like the mid-day sun. In the Old Testament it beams forth with the paler and borrowed light of the moon, and in other nations shines only with the fainter lustre of the stars; but amongst all there is some light, however dim, guiding the traveller through the dark passage of death to the bright land which lies beyond. The reality of the spiritual world has been more or less felt wherever human beings have existed; and every man who has reflected upon external nature, and the contrast between it and his own inner life, may have been led to address his soul in the sublime language of Addison.

The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter and the crush of worlds.

TO ESTELLE.

SWEET Spirit, from your pure, white home of love
Stoop down this eventide, and let your hands,
Laden with snowy fragrance, rest on me;
Crown me with lilies—spirit-flowers of peace—
And chase the wandering shadows from my soul
With one rare visioned glance of the bright star
That shines for ever o'er your sparkling brow.
My heart is weary, darling; life is dark,
And nowhere in the thorny paths I find
The sister-friend to take me in her arms,
And kiss the sorrow from my trembling lip,
Until I cannot choose but smile for joy,
As thou hast done, my beautiful Estelle,
In thy brief visits to our darkened earth.
Come to me, sweet one; as in days gone by,
Fill me with wisdom, gathered from the lips
Of those divine ones at whose feet you sit,
And dream your happy, radiant, girlish dreams;
Put your gay fairy-laughter in my heart,
And make it flow in music from my lips,
The while I sit beneath the lilac trees,
And rock the babe to sleep upon my breast.
Come to me, darling; fill my soul again
With those bright images of rhythmic thought,
That seemed to fall like sunbeams from the star
That heralded your glorious approach;
Throw back the rich locks from your shining brow,
And smile upon me with those ocean eyes
Of deep unfathomable tenderness;
And while I think, "'Tis some Eolian harp,"
And swoon in trance for very rapturousness,
Your voice shall reach me, "Alice, why so sad,
For love is constant ever?"

As the flower
 Of evening's purple twilight, crushed and bowed,
 Fainting all day beneath the burning sun,
 Lifts up her head to meet the passionate breeze
 Wooing her back to life with thrilling sighs
 Among the grasses where she droops forlorn,
 Even I, so utterly alone to-night,
 Have felt the breath of a reviving love,
 The answer to my spirit's utter need,
 Poured out upon me, a long sunny stream
 Of possible happiness, love-dreams God will bless,
 And hopes that shed around my way-worn feet
 A gleam of more than mortal radiance.
 The green and gold that lingered in the sky,
 The bloomy purple of the distant hills,
 The little church so sweetly calm and still,
 The careless children playing on the graves ;
 Nay, e'en the cross that stood in soft relief
 Against the golden background, could not lift
 My spirit higher than to that sweet home
 Where thou wert learning all I longed to know ;
 And so I cried for thee, in silence deep
 And agonizing as the hush of death :
 For but one touch of those inspiring hands,
 One breath from thy full heart, in mystic thrill
 To chase the anguish from my throbbing brow,
 And like a sun-ray flashing through the dark
 Of thunder-clouds, and seizing all their tears
 To make a rainbow that should arch the skies—
 You came, my saint—my friend—my true Estelle !
 Say, did you touch me with a fairy's wand,
 Or kneel beside me with your shining arms
 Enfolded round about my fainting form,
 Pouring new life in me with kisses sweet
 And tender as the glow of dying day ?
 Nature but brought me saddening thoughts of thee,
 Of all my loss and all thy happiness ;
 But thou hast led me with thy gentle hands
 Back to the Father, who is one with love,
 And therefore constant ever.

So I kneel
 Prostrate before that awful Loveliness,
 The shadow of whose unseen guiding hand
 I feel upon me. Is it thy voice, Estelle ?
 Or but the echo of some long-dreamt dream
 Steeping my soul in a delicious balm
 Of love and blessing ? Is it the moonlight, love,
 That sheds upon me this soft hallow'd light ?
 And have you dropped the lilies on my head,
 That all this fragrance floats upon the air ?
 The star grows dim, I know your happy tears
 Are falling as I pray, for God alone
 (So say you through that silver mist of joy)
 Can crown His children with the flowers of peace !

A. M. LINDLEY.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.*

As spirit-communications vary very much in their nature, according to the special purpose which the controlling spirits have in view, and the circumstances of those with whom they hold intercourse, it may not be uninteresting to relate some of the experiences of a private family, who entered on the investigation of Spiritualism among themselves, without any personal instruction from more experienced persons, and solely with the view of discovering whether it was a real *fact*, or a delusion of the imagination.

I pass over our first attempts with the table, in which, with much to convince us that it was influenced by an *intelligent* power and one outside of ourselves, and much that was interesting to us, we met with the usual fate of too-trusting and careless beginners, and were often deceived. I pass over, also, our subsequent use of the indicator, a much more satisfactory mode of communication, but which at first, from the same causes, led us into many mistakes and follies from the mischievous deceptions of idle, frivolous, and still worse spirits. This experience, however, though trying and vexatious, was not without its use, by teaching us greater caution in receiving messages, and by proving to us the fact, not always sufficiently understood and appreciated by novices, that spirits retain their earthly character on their entrance into their new abode, and that the inferior ones are quite as ready to communicate with earth as those above them, and can do it quite as easily in these ways, especially when proper conditions are not attended to. No wonder, therefore, that many foolish and stupid messages come from the spirit-world, which scandalise unbelievers in Spiritualism, but which are really proofs of the fact just stated, and known to all Spiritualists. Why so many of such messages are published, is not easy to say.

I go on to the far higher modes of communication, trance and similar mediumship, in which we were highly favoured, as one of our family, in whom we can implicitly trust, became developed in two or three years as a trance-speaking, seeing and impressional medium, not only being used by the spirits in

* This article has been contributed by a lady of great intelligence and the very highest respectability, personally known to, and greatly respected by ourselves. For family reasons she does not wish her name to appear in the pages of the *Spiritual Magazine*, and we therefore, although somewhat contrary to our usual custom, insert her communication anonymously. We can assure our readers however, that every word stated in it may be thoroughly relied upon.—ED. S.M.

giving us long messages, but also often hearing their direct voices in their well-known earthly tones, feeling their touches, and seeing them in broad daylight, or gaslight, and occasionally for a considerable time together, even for nearly an hour, when he also, at times, heard the voice and felt the touch as distinctly as when the spirit lived on earth. These communications came to us spontaneously, with no seeking of any kind from us, even as they were spontaneously granted at first to our great surprise, when the medium, who had reclined on the sofa and fallen asleep through sudden and uncontrollable drowsiness, occasioned as we had falsely imagined from fatigue, sat up, and with closed eyes, delivered a long and very serious address from an old friend of mine, who had been at least twenty years in spirit-land, and was unknown to the medium; and this message we were forbidden to tell him till a certain date (about ten days afterwards), so that till that time he was in utter ignorance of a communication of great interest to us all, but which would never have entered the mind of any one of us, unless it had been so brought before us; and before it was related to him he was evidently contemplating arrangements not in conformity to its tenor. As we now make no attempt whatever to attract our celestial friends, we feel their messages to be far more reliable than if we had sought them.

These messages have related very much to our own personal affairs, and as such, are of course of an entirely private character; but we have also received much general instruction from them, and it is some of this experience which I propose now to relate to show the use of Spiritualism, when the investigation is carried on in a family circle, where the harmony of feeling, which is so important and almost essential to really valuable manifestations is more likely to prevail than in a mixed party. There, too, private matters can be treated of as they could not otherwise be, and communications given of the greatest interest. By far the greater portion of our messages have come to us from departed relations and friends, as would seem most likely under the circumstances, and this renewed intercourse with them is one of the most *obvious* blessings of Spiritualism; and to those who do not need the mere *proof* of another and a better life, it gives a *realisation* of the fact most valuable and most delightful to such (and there may be many), whose minds have dwelt on the dark surroundings of death and the grave, till the life beyond has become clothed, in their imagination with their sombre livery, while speculations as to the nature of that life then so greatly hidden from us, have only tended to make it a greater perplexity. But when those we have known and loved on earth come from the spirit-land, speak to us with their wonted affection, and talk to us of the things of earth and the happiness of heaven, in

many ways proving their identity, we realise the blessed change which has passed over them through death, and feel no longer that we are divided from them by an impassable barrier while we remain on earth, but perceive that they are cognisant of our affairs, and very often employed in helping us when we know it not. We feel the union of the two worlds, and are half lifted into heaven while we still inhabit the earth. Our departed friends are still human, and no such change has taken place in them as would divide them from those of us who are in sympathy with them. They are ready to welcome us in due time to the realms above, while still aiding us in our life-work on earth. Such is the experience we have had. Having thrown aside their fleshly bodies, and received higher powers suited to their new abode, they are still the same beings that they were on earth.

Our controlling spirits seem appointed to guide us, under Divine direction, both in secular and spiritual matters, directing the former in relation to the latter, showing us the unavoidable connection between our earth and spirit-life, the latter being the necessary outcome of the former, and helping us so to order our lives here, that we may have the less to regret hereafter; in fact, seeking to elevate our whole spiritual life in a most practical way. They abstain almost entirely from precise descriptions of spirit-life, as I presume it would be almost beyond their power to give us any information on matters so entirely above our present experience without the danger of misleading us; but they strive to show us what we must do to gain the blessings of heaven, and now and then some details are incidentally given to us which afford some little glimpses into spirit-life; and they exemplify in their own experience the evil of sin by stating its effects upon themselves; for it is evident that the increased intensity of spirit-feeling, and the holiness of the moral atmosphere surrounding them, leads even the good to view their earthly lives with deep contrition, and to feel very painfully, at times, the leaven of sin they have still to overcome. We all know that the more the conscience becomes purified and enlightened, the darker does sin of every kind appear. The good spirits feel as *sins* what we are too apt to look upon as *infirmities*. Irritability of temper is one which our controlling spirits have spoken against very strongly, with its attendant vices of bitterness of feeling and expression, sneering and cutting repartee, all being felt to be opposed to that spirit of love and gentleness which were exhibited by the Saviour, and without which, we are told, we are none of His. Love, true Christian charity, alone unites us to Christ. We know how difficult it is to attain it here, amidst the sins and provocations of earth; but if not *fostered*

and *cultivated here*, it would seem likely to be exposed to greater trials in the spirit-world, where free-will exists as it does here, and where the good spirits appear to be very generally engaged in the spiritual instruction of those below them, with whom they must unavoidably encounter much to try them. Perfect candour, truthfulness, self-control, and calmness, are strongly insisted on. Right and wrong are considered in the spirit-world, not pleasure or pain, which are of very secondary importance, though pain is never inflicted but as a means of spiritual good. Everything *there* is regarded in reference to holiness of heart and life. We were once told, "There is no calmness in the Lord's sight in the mere absence of ungentle words and ungentle manners, the only calmness He ever accepts is the calmness of the inward spirit;" thus showing the height to which we have to aspire. The higher we attain in virtue and holiness *here*, the more rapid will be our advancement in spirit-life, and, of course, *vice versa*. A spirit once said to us, "A stitch on the earth, done in time, takes nine off the list here;" rather a quaint but expressive statement, and one that should lead us to constant watchfulness and effort, counting nothing trivial which affects our character and disposition. We must struggle with every power we have against the temptations of earth, that so "an entrance may be ministered to us *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

We are taught that much of the good, and evil, too, of an individual often lies "on the surface;" that the heart and dispositions are judged in heaven, and bring their own corresponding retribution either of joy or sorrow, far more than individual actions, thus often reversing the judgments of earth, and showing that "many who are first shall be last, and the last first." Our intellectual beliefs, too, are of consequence only as they influence our conduct, and lead us to holier and purer lives. The holiest and purest creed avails nothing except as it produces greater righteousness. The spirits, we find, differ among themselves as to dogma, even in matters that we should have naturally expected would have been made plain to them from their entrance into spirit-life; but they differ in amity; sects and sectarianism do not exist there. The endeavours of the good spirits are all directed to a higher life of righteousness, and they leave intellectual, metaphysical, and theological squabbles alone, considering them as earthly follies, not to be admitted into a heaven of love, where the standard of holiness placed before them is so infinitely high, that they cannot afford to waste their strength on meaner matters. To show the difference between our preconceived opinions as to the spirit-world and the actual reality, I will quote part of a message from one of our most frequent and earnest

celestial visitors :—"What a blessing it is that we are not condemned for our involuntary errors. How many saints while they were on the earth, and who were gifted with poetic talent, wrote psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs expressing what they believed to be the truth of the 'heavenly state.' And they portrayed that state as one entirely free from physical suffering, from mental disturbance, from anything, indeed, that could be the least alloy to their perfect happiness; and when I was with you I used to read such hymns with great delight, and sing them in the temples made with hands. The writers and the singers were right in spirit, but often very wrong as to the fact. Since I have been here, I have known, of course, that there is no physical suffering, but I have found out to my cost, that the mental suffering continues, and that it is God, and Christ, and They alone, who know the perfect, the ineffable peace. *We* were finite, *we* are finite, *we* shall be finite for ever, and as finite beings we shall always have to learn; making mistakes in our learning, and so transgressing the law. We hope, and live upon that hope, that, in the far-off future, we shall come into a state where our transgressions will be involuntary, and of that kind only; but it's a long way off, except for here and there a few: for the standard is *so* high, and the creature is *so* weak, and the Creator is *so* strong."

Work is appointed for all the better spirits—for those who yield themselves as willing servants to their Lord and Master Christ,—work suited to their capacities and abilities, and for which their earthly training has, in some degree, fitted them, and by such work their future onward progress will be helped, if it be done faithfully and cheerfully. Most spirits appear to be engaged in part in teaching those immediately below them, thus each class may be helped onward, and thus the very bad may at last, perhaps, be reached. It would seem, however, as if lower spirits were left, *at first*, very much to themselves, in order, apparently, that they might advance through their own free-will and individual effort; but when these do not avail, stronger and more direct measures are adopted.

We have been told of "dungeons" in spirit-land, which were explained to us as severe mental and moral discipline to eradicate obstinate persistence in evil. A very curious instance of this was once given to us in relation to a spirit, whom we knew only as a spirit, and merely by name. In the midst of a social circle in which his unguarded language and conduct had called down the rebukes of his companions, Christ suddenly appeared and adjudged him to the dungeon for a limited period to cure him of this unbridled license and also because "he had abused his great privilege of communication with his friends on earth, until

at last the patience of the Lord has been wearied, and for his own sake he has been removed." After the term of his appointed captivity had expired, we were told by another spirit that he had "been released on parole." It should always be borne in mind that whenever communication with frivolous spirits is indulged in from mere amusement, the poor spirits themselves are injured as well as ourselves, and suffer in consequence. The communication between spirits and ourselves should always be considered as a very sacred thing, and a high privilege permitted for the benefit of both worlds, designed for much mutual good, but correspondingly injurious to both parties when abused on either side. Inferior spirits often seek intercourse with great perseverance, and it is not *always* desirable to send such spirits away, without trying to improve them, for they are sometimes greatly helped by the conversation and advice and sympathy of mortals. Such spirits, who are really desirous of improvement, we are told, often frequent the houses of really good people in order to grow better by what they see and hear there. What a lesson this is to us on earth to be always on our guard, for we are told that we are seldom without the presence of some of these invisibles, on whom our influence for good or evil may fall. Were the probable presence of these unseen witnesses of our conduct fully known and *realised*, it would be likely to prove a powerful incentive to right conduct, and an equal deterrent from sin with many whose spiritual natures are not sufficiently high and refined to feel the constant oversight exercised by their Heavenly Father and their Saviour. *This*, of course, should be the paramount incentive to right conduct, that we may not wound that gracious Love which is ever ready to help and purify us; but there are thousands who do not realize this, who, could they be persuaded of spirit-supervision in the persons of dear and valued relatives and friends, would hesitate much more than they now do to commit open sin, and do what they would assuredly avoid, were mortal eyes upon them.

Spirits see and hold intercourse with Christ himself according to their capacity for so doing. Our chief communicating spirits have this high privilege, and have many times been sent to us directly from Him, with special commands and instruction, and sometimes with prophetic information as to our earthly future, but we are always checked when we *enquire* on this subject. Beginners are apt to do this, especially with the table or indicator, but it only encourages low spirits and almost invariably leads to deception. No prediction can be trusted which is not spontaneously given.

Our spirit-messages have proved to us most clearly how constantly we are watched and cared for, even sometimes in

matters we might otherwise have considered too trivial to be noticed, and as occasionally the commands relating to such things have come to us with the authority of Christ himself, we receive *proof* that "even the hairs of our head are all numbered," to use the language of Scripture for such minute supervision. It is a solemn as well as a cheering realization of the teachings of Christ, brought home to us in a way that admits of no doubt whatever, and ought greatly to strengthen our faith. The entire trust which the good spirits evidently feel in God's infinite wisdom and love, in circumstances mysterious and even painful to them, is a strong incentive to us to cultivate the same cheerful submission to His will in our still more ignorant condition. "Trust, trust," (said a dear spirit to us once) "as we have to do here. We have to trust many a time when we can see nothing, but we know that the Lord is in the darkness, although we cannot see through it; and even when we cannot hear His voice, we know He is there, and therefore all is well." And another spirit, speaking of God, said to us, "That great Almighty, Infinite Love we call it, it is with you as it is with us, and we sometimes think to ourselves how grieved it must be at all the hard thoughts about it. As F. W. Robertson said once in a sermon he was preaching to us here, 'The very greatness of God's nature makes it impossible for Him to be indifferent to any of us. A small nature might pass us by, but it is the glory of the Infinite that nothing escapes His eye or His interest.'" I know no higher benefit that we have received from our spirit-communion than the fact I have already mentioned—that of receiving direct messages from Christ. They bring us, as it were, into contact with Him, making us, in some degree, to feel His presence. On one occasion when we were quietly arguing with a spirit on a private matter, in which some of us were blamed, as we thought rather unjustly, Christ Himself interposed, the spirit in an altered, subdued, and most reverent voice saying, "The Lord says, 'No more words. I am judge, simply obey the order and you will get the blessing. I quite understand it; and when they once know *that*, it should be sufficient for them. Receive my blessing.'" "

Shall we not gladly raise the cry,
Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

On one most memorable occasion Christ Himself spoke to us for nearly an hour through our medium, commencing, to our great astonishment (after a spirit had spoken, telling us to write the message, and most solemnly enjoining "perfect silence"), "Listen, for it is your Lord who speaks, who will speak to you through His medium, and he who receiveth Me receiveth Him who sent Me." It was a most thrilling experience, and one

never to be forgotten. The message, foretelling trials, urging fidelity to duty, and promising corresponding help, was delivered in so calm and impressive a manner, combined with such exceeding tenderness, as to make us feel sure it was the Lord Himself who spoke, for no one else *could* have uttered such a message. Good spirits, of course, would never think of attempting such a sacrilege; and as to bad and wicked spirits, it would have been an utter impossibility for *them* to have even conceived it. The attendant pervading influence, too, during its delivery, was too elevating to allow a suspicion of deception. Our own spirits were present at the time, as they afterwards told us, and a very numerous company of the celestials besides. It was, indeed, a very great privilege, involving, of course, like all privileges, corresponding responsibility.

At other times, too, but very occasionally, we have had Christ's own words repeated to us by our spirits, He being present sometimes, as we have been afterwards informed. We have also been occasionally gratified by our spirits telling us of things they have heard from His own lips in the spirit-world. *Thus*, we have had a few interesting explanations given to us of Scripture passages, tending much to their elucidation; but our spirits are reticent in telling us all they know, apparently from the feeling that enough has been vouchsafed to us for our earthly needs, enough for all purposes of spiritual improvement, and that curiosity is a feeling that must not be encouraged. Surely these are not trifling advantages, and they are the legitimate results of spirit-communion, when engaged in seriously and devoutly, and they are much more likely to be attained by a harmonious family than by a less restricted circle. Of course a medium is one of the essential conditions of all such communications, but probably there are very few, if any, families where mediumship could not be developed in some member of a family, when sought by a serious and harmonious circle with patience and perseverance for some time, more or less according to the existing conditions for evolving the desired mediumship.

We learn that spirits assemble at times for regular religious services, though probably not at stated periods, at least our Sunday is not one of them, and that allows many of them to attend some of our services on earth. We have been told that there were six churches in England, peculiarly noticeable as frequented by many thousands of spirits every Sunday; only three of them were particularised to us—they were Mr. Lynch's (he was living at the time this statement was made), Hugh Stowell Brown's, and another less known to the general public. It is evident that spirits pursue their earthly calling in spirit-land when it is practicable and congenial to them. Thus, earthly ministers,

when *really such* by right *divine*, that is, when the Spirit of God has actually fitted them, and in that way *called* them to their solemn office, continue at times to instruct their fellow-spirits above, and sometimes they help by their spirit-influence the services of their brethren on earth. Some medical practitioners, who have been attached to such studies on earth, and made attainments therein, pursue them in spirit-land, and by their increased power of searching into disease and of seeking true remedies for it, they are able to give advice through suitable mediums to mortal patients now, and such is often sought with great benefit by those who have faith in spirit-communion. Celestial artists and musicians, as is well known, often display their talents through appropriate mediums.

Incidental mention has been made to us in relation to some of the Apostles, who seem to be now engaged in such labours as would seem to be peculiarly suited to their characters, and their peculiar individuality appears still to be preserved.

Spirit-communion, while it helps our difficulties in some things, adds to them in others; and our faith is still often called into exercise purposely, no doubt, as it would not be well for us always to walk by sight. One thing that has often surprised us, especially of late, is the long intervals we have sometimes had without any visit from the celestials, and not unfrequently in circumstances when we should especially have expected them, and been most thankful to have had them. Still we do nothing; only wait as patiently as we can, feeling sure that their visits are withheld for wise and good reasons.

On one occasion when our chief spirit had been away longer than usual, it was explained as follows:—"Sometimes I have been unable to come, and sometimes when I thought I was able to come I have been forbidden. I have never questioned, of course. We are not accustomed to question *here*. We often feel it is enough happiness to be honoured by receiving the Lord's commands, whatever form they may assume, and we very soon learn to ask no reason. The Lord has His reasons, and it is quite enough for us—quite enough. I think some of us would not care to know, even if we might." In reference to a predicted trial which had not been realized, we were told just at the time that we were led to expect it, "That prediction was a possibility put before you that you might feel it as though it would be actual; but see, now, how it has been. 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.' The dear old Book says, 'When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.' That is, God makes the enemies of those who please the Lord to be quiet. They don't know why, and sometimes it puzzles them,

but they have to do it." And again, "The warning is often given to prevent the very thing that ought not to be."

And in regard to promised good we were told, "God makes all kinds of promises; but then, if His children do not respond to the promises, they are null and void." Evidently showing that predictions for either good or evil are intended often to be contingent upon the conduct of those to whom they are given.

On one occasion it was said to us, "There is no need to be unreasonably anxious as to what temptations may come to us; but we are worse than fools if we think that there is any temptation which *cannot* overcome us." And the passage, "Watch and pray," having been repeated, it was added, "To watch without prayer would be presumption, and I am sure to pray without watching would be equally so."

In relating these experiences, I by no means suppose them to be unique. No doubt others equally valuable may be and are obtained by other families. My object has been to show what results may be gained through private family circles, and probably if these were more frequently employed by serious investigators, they would prove most useful in leavening society with the higher forms of spiritual manifestations—those tending to elevate its principles and conduct, leaving physical manifestations of all kinds to more public circles.

SONGS FOR SPIRITUALISTS.*

OUR COUNTRY AND OUR QUEEN.

A CHEER for dear old England—our famous native land!
For gallant deeds on land and sea renowned on every hand;
Where Sidney, Blake, and Hampden died our liberty to gain,
Where Wellington and Nelson fought that freedom to maintain;
Where Shakespeare lived, and Milton sang, and mighty men have been:
A cheer for dear old England and for our noble Queen!

Our noble Queen! Hurrah!
Hurrah! our noble Queen!

A cheer for this our native land! where Alfred great and good,
Made laws so wise in early times, and all her foes withstood;
Where good Queen Bess in after years fired every English heart
To meet Spain's proud invading host and play the hero's part.
And now we live in peaceful days, thank God! Yet we have seen
How true brave British hearts still love our Country and our Queen!

Our Country and our Queen! Hurrah!
Our Country and our Queen!

* Of course this little song is not specially or exclusively for Spiritualists; but as they are at least as loyal and patriotic as their fellow-countrymen, I have included it among those I have thought suitable for their social meetings.—T. S.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCE.*

BY THE REV. L. A. ALFORD, D.D., LL.D.

THE science of all sciences is the science of anthropology, embracing, as it does, philosophy, physiology, anatomy, theology, and therapeutics; and in its discussion you, of course, will not expect me, in a single lecture, to give more than a cursory glance at subjects so vast in themselves as open up before us in any one of the above branches of science. The American Anthropological Association assumes to be based upon spiritual and philosophical facts, and not upon theories long adopted or on ideas because they are new. We hold, with the celebrated Dr. Boyle, that "truth is the same, whether fresh from the mint or a thousand years old. But if we find a counterfeit, neither the prince's image or inscription, nor its date, how ancient soever, nor the multitude of hands through which it has passed unsuspected, will engage us to receive it."

We hold that the fulness of Deity is as exhaustless to-day as in millions of centuries past; that His thoughts of man's necessities in his progressive career are as active and benevolent now as in pentecostal glories, and should he turn the great throbbing mind of the world from the miraculous to the scientific—from laws and theories of faith to facts and philosophical conclusions, no contradistinction of revelation or purpose in His eternal procedure can possibly exist. "He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all."

The *fons et origo* of man—that is, the fountain from whence his nature sprang—the origin of his wonderful being, is a theme as vast in its unfoldings as it is relevant to our contemplation. It must in the nature of things, whether we trace the scale of being backward or forward, end in the incomprehensible fulness of God. Whether we look at what philosophers call "ideal integration" or "molecular aggregation," the same great problem unfolds itself in magnitudes incomprehensible.

What is the Mind? What is the Spirit? What is the body material? What is the immaterial soul? It is not our present intention to trace anthropology through the labyrinthian network of prehistoric ages in order that from fossil skulls or unintelligible relics of sculptured rock we may decipher chronological data; nor, indeed, by microscopic development unfold the abdominal viscera of anthropoid apes, to learn of man; nor

* The Annual Address delivered before the American Anthropological Association in the Mission M. E. Church, Chicago, on November 1st, 1874.

yet to plunge into the stream of knowledge that flows in continued life-germ, or monads of minutest blastema, and from thence to nothing, in order to find the undeveloped link that unites the molecule to the activities of *ecce homo*—the man. Nor do we wish to trace the undeveloped myth of metempsychosis, like Pythagorus, who believed in man as an aggregation of monad life, which, for a little time, danced in the glee of muscular ovum, concentrating in one grand life-centre and then disappearing into monad life again, to appear only in another form, landing ourselves on the grand conclusions of Pope in his recognition of Pantheism, "whose body nature is and God the soul." No. This is not the doctrine entertained by the honourable body I here represent. While we freely admit that even the mighty oak is preformed in the acorn, and the reproductive monad is chemically evolved from the mute vegetable, we do not admit that spiritual life is evolved from any such chemical procedure—that psychical life cannot be evolved by any process of vegetable decomposition.

Whenever we attempt to trace molecular synthesis to psychical organisms we fail, for we are always introduced to a lower order of insect life; to existences of monad being, with no apparent capacity, declaratively, to glorify the great Author more than ferns and flowers which exist only by the processes of germ-life.

Some undeveloped barrier, some insuperable hiatus, opens up before us, saying, "Thus far shalt thou go, but no farther." In fact, there is nothing farther in that direction. We assert that some insuperable barrier exists to prevent the birth of sentient intelligence, though monad life may exist *ad infinitum*; nor can the form of being, be it ever so near, in resemblance to man, inherit its fatherhood in God, for "God is a Spirit," and the infinite stretch across this unknown abyss that yawns beneath the finite and infinite no human capacity can eliminate.

The American Anthropological Association recognizes in man the spiritual and the material. The birth of the one involves the birth of the other, and all by the supreme life-force of the Divine Author; and that this generic and genetic life stroma inheres in creation and not in evolution. Man is a celestial as well as a terrestrial being, and it would be as relevant in good logic to suppose the angel evolved from man, and Deity himself evolved from the angel, as to suppose man to have struggled up into the possession of two more senses than any of the other orders of animal creation, and to a soul with seven corresponding attributes.

God exists independent of angels, angels independent of man, and man independent of the lower races, so far as life

procedure is superinduced. That is, celestial beings were not, in their *fons et origo* of life, evolved from man, for they existed prior to him, and quite beyond the range of material attractions—independent and before; hence, ethereal entities exist, not out of, but independent and contradistinct, of all material substances, through the creative force of the eternal God.

In respect to those intricate cases in protoplasmic organisms where ciliated monads have been taken from water in flasks hermetically sealed and exposed to a temperature of 275 degrees, and that eight weeks subsequently were revealed as living ciliated animalculæ, we of course do not question, for we are ever reminded that the life-spirit of God pervades all matter, but to suppose that, when we think we have killed all life in matter, all life in matter is therefore killed, would be as foolish as to suppose the sun goes out when it disappears from our sight behind the western hills, and that God creates a new sun every morning.

We hold that there is no process known to mortals whereby a spiritual, moral, and intellectual being can, by chemical combinations, develop entity, indivisibility and eternity, with moral responsibilities and prerogatives. Of all the races man alone is the child of God; to assert this in reference to an ape or a monkey is blasphemy; it would insult propriety towards Deity as much as it would the noble man to call such a thing as a baboon or ape his child. God recognises no fatherhood in the lower orders of organic life.

The basis on which this Association chooses to rest—the rock towering high above Atheism and Materialism in reference to anthropology—is that man possesses seven senses, two of which are immortal; that he possesses a human form, and that these senses are the *mind* of that organism; that beasts possess only five senses, and these constitute the mind of the beast; that man proper is the immortal form known to us by the term Soul, and that this form possesses seven spiritual senses which we call attributes, which is the soul's spirit; that these seven spirits or attributes unite with and are held responsible to God and to man in the control of his seven human senses, and upon this union of senses and attributes the philosophy of moral responsibility depends.

The two immortal senses, *viz.*: talking and judging, are so immediately interlinked with the corresponding attributes of truth and love, and by spirit endosmosis harmonise into mutual responsibility, that on earth and in heaven time and eternity are by them united, and deeds done in the body are carried through the vale of the tomb into the presence of our great Author, where the whole life of human responsibility finds its grand central judgment throne.

We may say, in truth, that by these two senses the gates of the celestial metropolis are opened or closed to the soul for ever. "Ask and ye shall receive"—"Believe and thou shalt be saved." Thus, in answer to prayer, the soul drinks from an unseen fountain—excitants and exhilaration. The beautiful, the sublimely devotional, carries the soul of the listener, not only to the gates of the heavenly, but animating with a strong impulse of imitation. Now, if this ideal integration or spiritual make-up of our organism were not composed of immaterial substances which, by exosmosis, pervade the mortal senses, these results could not possibly follow.

Let us not lose sight of the idea—from some higher nature than the animal proceeds through our senses an ideational consciousness of power, pervading, filiating, loving, and so overwhelming in the majesty of its motives and prerogatives that we feel drawn to its embrace, and almost involuntarily shout, "This is the spirit of Christ in our hearts, crying 'Abba Father!'"

From whence in man springs this subtle consciousness of ideal integration? We answer, from the eternal mind of God in man, inherited by us in His fatherhood, and confirmed to us by His spirit. Rob man of this distinction—that is, give him only five senses—and when ranked with the lion, the gorilla, he is their inferior. In sight, they can see farthest and quickest; in hearing, they can far outreach his sense; of smell, how vastly his superior; of taste and of the sense of feeling, they are his equal; and of strength, to them, he is but a child. But give him to talk with God, with angels, and with men; give him the judgment power to recognise himself the child of God, with superhuman genius, and let these powers be as immortal as the God that formed them, and he is advanced to the celestial, and outranks all the multitude of God's creations.

Königsburg's great philosopher very truthfully remarks that "the two sublimest contemplations for the soul of man are the starry heavens and the moral law." What could a beast, a bird, or a fish do with these resources of sublime contemplation? They lack the talking sense and the judging sense; hence to them the stars are specks of light, and the moral law of less avail than the twitter of the bird or the roaring of the lion.

The life-centres of the soul, or the spirit of the soul, partake of the "seven spirits of God," and were breathed into a life connection with the seven senses of the organism, and link light with sight; life with feeling; holiness with the sense of smelling; justice with the sense of taste; mercy with hearing; love with judging; and truth with the sense of talking.

Thus man is the child of progressive life, carrying with him

into the eternal state in his two immortal senses the identity of time in its moral aspect and relationships of earth, to be enjoyed throughout eternity.

But to man the moral law unfolds the image of the heavenly, transcending the sensuous imagination in the infinite rectitude of that law which binds him to love God with all the powers of his soul; and on the other, the starry skies, the celestial grandeur of the cosmos, in the limitless material universe of God. Here the overpowering majesty of God becomes sublimely visible, as worlds emerge from behind worlds in the ultimathule of God's wonders, and the heavenly planisphere seems studded with eyes of imperishable light.

God alone is the absolute cause of human reality, and this relation can be as clearly seen in man's upward gaze toward the promised Canaan as can the attracted needle as it rests in the direction of the northern heavens. The great truth of our being is this: that *mind* exists subjectively to physical nature when the Divine Spirit controls the will, and this it can do through the attributes of the soul, as joy can cause the cheek to glow with a smile through the senses of the body.

Mind is not the spirit; if so, beasts have spirits, for all races have minds. The soul is not the body, and only through the senses is it associated with the body.

No inquiry or development in the life-force of being, whether of biologists or scientists, can obviate the conclusion that in man's visible bodily existence an essential faculty pervades his nature; not of atomic matter, but of spiritual life, and that this life blastema is the superior associate of a still higher order of intelligences. In this we are placed beyond the power of "molecular aggregation," quite in the realm of ideal integration, and, Materialists and Atheists to the contrary notwithstanding, man links with God in traduction, dissimilar to any other form of organic life.

If, in an inch square of the human brain, the microscope detects not less than six million of perfectly formed fibres, how infinite indeed is the Mind that planned these minute channels of intellectual development; and indeed is it less marvellous to create ideality of spirit than to combine by integration so many nerves in complete harmony of action as the channel of sensation and of thought?"

The American Anthropological Association claims the attention of the Christian world in this, that the union of the human senses with the soul's attributes logically link the undying to the dying, the moral to the physical, the soul to the body, and thus scientifically demonstrate the powers of the efferent and afferent nerves of this wonderfully constructed organism.

In conclusion, the great cry of the age is not in the direction of Biblical charts to logically illustrate the phenomena of the union of the soul with Christ; the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence and the method by which it enters the vital forces and controls sinful action, but simply gain, fame, rule or ruin, "big I, and little you." If it were only fashionable in the churches, we would not hesitate to ape the Shah of Persia with his 352 wives, and boast of our gold and rejoice in the gods of fashionable life; in religious balls and fashionable religious gambling; take gain for godliness, and follow Plutus under the garb of the Holy Nazarene.

The mind, as we have shown, grows out of our depraved senses, five of which are under the condemnation of Death. How vain the thought that these totally depraved senses will be sufficient in themselves to point us across an abyss before which they too must perish. What but the spirit renewed by the light and life of God can open up to our gaze the celestial beatitudes of the glorified? What else than the blood of the Eternal Covenant can cleanse our sense of talking, which is so stultified by "cursings and bitterness"—by a "false tongue" we are accursed to ourselves—and what else than the "fountain filled with blood" can wash the stain away?

Enough money is spent in teaching teachers to teach theology to convert a world, and theological training consists more in Hebrew roots and dead languages, than in the philosophy of Spiritual correspondence. "Give us," say they, "a chart of Palestine, a map of Paul's travels, but not a chart of Man—it will require too much study, too deep study—we have no heart to the task." We need a theology that we can understand. The chart of Man enables us to understand our double self—to cultivate the powers of the soul, and learn the grand distinction between the child of God and the beast of the field.

By it, we readily recognise mind as being subjectively and objectively under the law of death—the mind must die, at least so much of it as is identified with the five animal senses; we will also understand that the spirit is undying, and carries with it into the eternal world, in the immortal senses of talking and judging, an identity of time's activity—its treasures and its title to "the pearl of great price." Ashamed to lecture from a chart of the soul and body? God forbid!

"And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." So let us assert in mental philosophy, in theology and in therapeutics, let there be light.

The American Anthropological Association most earnestly desire to shun the direful rocks of superstition on the one hand, and the equally dangerous whirlpool of Secularism on the other.

As Anthropologists they hope to gather garlands for the mind, out of the storehouse of Omnipotence, exotic—celestial.

Were this not possible, humanity, with its inexorable aspirations after celestial beatitudes, must terminate in the miserable slough of nonentity—the universe a sepulchre, with no rising sun; no spirit in God or man; and material nature only a mocking delusion—a Golgotha from eternity to eternity—the dreary waste of Atheism—a desert without an oasis, past, present, or to come.

But this is a delusion. We shall carry in our immortality of spirit, educated thoughts, elevated conceptions, spiritual associations, love's tenderest remembrances, personal identity, and God's image. Man mortal and immortal; man glorified, and placed in the scale of being as exalted as the highest conceptions of the divinely educated soul can possibly apprehend; "kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign with Him for ever and ever!"

We hail in the science of Anthropology the ecstasies of their thrice illustrious welcome to the mansions prepared of God for His people—man glorious in mortality, man glorious in immortality, and man doubly glorious in the realms of unceasing activity, of adoration, and of love!

HYMNS FOR THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

THE LAWS OF NATURE THE STEDFASTNESS OF GOD.

THE heavens bend over all in peace
And benediction each new day;
The stars their vigils never cease,
But constant keep their ancient way:

As when Creation sprang to light
On this our Earth, and Time began
Its measured round of Day and Night,
And in its long procession—Man.

Seed-time and harvest come and go;
The worlds through their vast orbit sweep;

The Ocean-tides still ebb and flow:
All their appointed seasons keep.

All things continue as of old
Their wonted course, nor haste nor wait;
The Moon does not her light withhold,
The lark still sings at heaven's gate.

The daisy looks up to the sun;
The forest trees their branches wave;
Toward the sea the rivers run;
The cradle stands beside the grave:

And in man's heart lives deathless hope

Of life for evermore to be;
His soul itself the horoscope
By which he casts its destiny.

The laws of Nature firm and sure,
Through time and space, in soul and sod,
As still unchanging they endure,
Proclaim the constancy of God.

T. S.

OCCASIONAL LEAVES FROM MY NOTE-BOOK.

BY GEORGE SEXTON, LL.D.

WITH the discontinuance of the *Christian Spiritualist* in September, I ceased printing the "Leaves from my Note-Book," which had appeared regularly in that journal from the time that I undertook the editorship. I did not intend at first to give them a place in this Magazine, because I considered that by so doing I should be introducing a feature somewhat different to any that have appeared during the sixteen years that the journal has been in existence. In the past month, however, I have received a considerable number of applications—some of them from persons whose opinions I value highly—asking me to continue the Notes in some one of the periodicals, and stating that those brief accounts of my personal doings were always read with the very greatest possible interest. As I have thought it advisable to comply with these somewhat numerous requests, I have come to the conclusion that as the *Christian Spiritualist* is now incorporated with the *Spiritual Magazine*, the latter journal is the proper medium for the publication of the Notes.

On Sunday, the 21st of August, I delivered a Discourse at the Cavendish Rooms, in the evening, on the "Ancient Sentence on Man to Toil and Suffer," in which I took up the doctrine of the Fall, as it had been taught in various religious systems, pointing out wherein I conceived its truth to consist. The congregation was large, and amongst those present were Dr. and Mrs. Hallock, from America. On the following Sunday, my friend, Mr. Young, of Swindon, officiated for me, and delivered a very able discourse entitled "What is Christianity?"

On Friday, September 3rd, I delivered a Lecture in the interest of the London Dietetic Reform Society, at the Collier Street School Room, Pentonville, on "Man's Proper Food." There was a good attendance, the Lecture was well received, and favourable notices of it appeared in several of the papers, one of which, the *National Food and Fuel Reformer*, by some very curious process, had a brief report of the lecture in the columns of the number which was in circulation some hours before the Lecture was given, and which I found some of the audience reading when I entered the room. It would have presented a somewhat ludicrous feature—though not I believe an unprecedented one in journalism—if from ill health or any other cause I had been prevented from delivering my Lecture. As it was, however, I kept my appointment, and the *National Food and Fuel Reformer* preserved its honour.

The winter being approaching, and my Evening Services at the Cavendish Rooms compelling me to remain in town on Sundays, I determined to turn my time to the best account, and therefore arranged for a series of Morning Discourses in addition to those given regularly in the evening. When I named this intention to my friends, I was told that I should be certain to fail, since many of my hearers came long distances and would not be able to attend therefore twice in the day; and that consequently I should very likely injure both congregations. Others, whose kind feelings I appreciate, informed me that I was working too hard, and that in the end my health would be sure to suffer. I replied to both that I would do what I believed to be my duty whatever might be the result. I have always found myself capable of a far greater amount of work than most men with whom I have come into contact, and at present I feel no lack either of energy or strength, and shall therefore labour on to the end. The support that I have received from the Spiritualists, either by their presence at my services or by the pecuniary aid that they have rendered me, is far from gratifying. Still I shall go on doing what I believe to be right, and trusting in God. Half a dozen or so of persons in the Spiritual Movement responded somewhat liberally to an appeal which my kind friend, Mr. Tebb, made on my behalf—the first in my life that I have ever allowed to be made—but the large mass took no heed of it. I have sacrificed in the cause of Spiritualism more than any save those who are intimately acquainted with the facts would believe; but I have obeyed the dictates of my conscience, and must leave the rest to God. Even at the present moment I am surrounded by clouds of such dark density that I scarcely see a ray of sunlight breaking through them, but I doubt not that God will in His own good time clear them away. The lines of Cowper's old hymn which I learned when a child are still the source to me of much consolation:—

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

I detest this subject of money, and only refer to it at all with the very greatest possible reluctance; I will, therefore, just say briefly, while I am on the subject, as the information has been asked for, that the entire amount subscribed in response to Mr. Tebb's appeal will not nearly cover the loss I have sustained on my journals, to say nothing of leaving anything for my own work. The Sunday Services are not as yet remunerative, and could hardly be expected to be, but they are progressing satisfactorily. I determined to try the experiment

of the Morning Services, despite the predictions of failure, and accordingly I commenced in September a series of Four Discourses on the "Divine Origin and Authority of Christianity." These I arranged as follows:—On the 5th, "Sceptical Theories invented to Account for the Origin of Christianity." 12th, "The Supernatural Element in Christianity." 19th, "Christian Ethics as a Moral Code." 26th, "The Influence of Christ's Teaching on the World." At the first of these the attendance was very small, but it gradually went on increasing until at the end there was a tolerably fair congregation. The Discourses were very much praised, and indeed I may remark, perhaps without egotism, that they were the result of very laborious research and much thought, and were prepared with great care. In getting them up I had in view, mainly, the objections of sceptics, learned and otherwise, with which I was perfectly familiar during the twenty years that I was connected with what is called the Free-thought party; and as my own mind had become satisfied, and my doubts set at rest on these great questions, I endeavoured to lead my hearers along the same lines of thought which I myself had travelled. That the Discourses were productive of good I know, and that alone perhaps ought to be sufficient to repay me for the time and labour spent in composing them. How one sighs for that world where material wants will not be constantly forcing their demands upon the attention, to the interruption of intellectual pursuits and religious work, and where the terrible anxieties, consequent upon this material plane of existence, shall have ceased for ever.

On the Sunday evenings during September I gave a series of Discourses upon the "Origin of Man," in which I dealt, at some length, with the several theories that have been propounded in ancient and modern times to account by Natural Law for the existence of Organic Beings, and the appearance on the earth of Life and Intelligence. These Discourses were essentially scientific, and dealt with the principal facts to be found in Natural History which seemed to favour the hypothesis of Evolution. I tried to do justice to all the theories that I dealt with, but at the same time to show that after all they must be regarded as mere speculations; by no means logically flowing from the facts on which they were pretended to be based. The attendance upon the occasions of the delivery of these Discourses was exceedingly good; indeed, on the last evening of the course the room was quite full. There has been a general request for these Lectures to be published, and I shall probably issue them shortly, either in a separate form or in the pages of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

This concluded my first quarter at the Cavendish Rooms,

and second of regular Sunday Services in London. Of course I had gone through the worst season of the year, and having kept together audiences during the hot weather of summer, I need not have much fear for the result in the winter. Unfortunately, however, the number of persons attending was not the only thing to be considered, there was the rent of the room, advertising and other heavy expenses, amounting to considerably over a hundred a year, without leaving anything whatever for myself personally. And as these sums became due at the commencement of the quarter, I found myself somewhat in straits. At the beginning of the Services, several well-known Spiritualists subscribed a guinea each for reserved seats. As they hardly ever attended, however, during the quarter, I suppose they considered that they did not get value for their money, and so did not renew their tickets for the second quarter; most of them, in fact, did not even deign to reply to the letter that was sent them. This of course placed me in a difficulty of a pecuniary character, from which I am not yet altogether free, for although the congregations have been large, and have subscribed liberally to the collections, yet of course such collections must necessarily prove inadequate to meet the current expenses.

The Services involved the necessity of a choir, and consequently of an organ; I therefore procured one on hire; and to enable me to meet the first quarterly payment convened a Concert, which took place at the Rooms on September 28th. There was an exceedingly good attendance, and everything passed off harmoniously. The proceedings of the evening were largely contributed to by the members of my own family, but several well-known ladies and gentlemen kindly volunteered their services, for which I tender them here my sincere thanks.

During the past month I have given on Sunday mornings a series of Discourses on the "Relations of Christianity to Human Life," which have been tolerably well attended. In the evenings I have dealt with some important topics connected with the existence of God. On the 3rd I took up the "Idea of God," or what the Germans call God-consciousness, tracing it through its various phases in the great Religions of the World, to its perfect development in Christianity. On the 10th I dealt with the "Doctrine of a Final Cause," and examined the theories of Causation held by Hume, Reid, Beattie, Browne, Berkeley, Dugald Stewart, Kant, J. Stuart Mill, Bain, Spencer, and others. I pointed out that nothing could satisfy our idea of a true Cause but an Uncaused Cause, and that therefore the doctrine of Causation led necessarily to God. I also explained Mr. Gillespie's *à priori* argument and showed that it had never been answered, and that all attempts to reply to it had

proved the most miserable of failures; and concluded by enlarging on the doctrine of Final Causes in its relation to the religious life of man. At the close of this Discourse, Mr. F. Wilson, who is known as the founder of what he calls a Comprehensive Church, the exact purpose of which I have never yet been able to understand, arose and enquired if he might ask a question. I replied "No," and went on with the Service, and there I supposed the matter had ended. When the next number of the *Medium*, however, came out, I found in its pages the following letter from Mr. Wilson, together with the remarks of the Editor appended thereto:—

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I went last Sunday evening to hear a Discourse by Dr. Sexton, whose language is flowing, and whose reasoning is close. As he does not allow questions (and as he does not, he has no right to call his Address a Discourse), I should like to object, through the *Medium*, to his illustration, as a disproof of God's goodness, of the tempest-tossed and sinking ship. If man goes in the water he is out of his natural condition and must take the consequences. It is the ship-builder, not God, who is responsible. Again, he introduces Christianity in Jesus, saying, "I am the way," &c.; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," &c., after having read aloud to us the first chapter to the Hebrews. If we are to prove all things, it is no use offering a personal statement for truth. Dr. Sexton might use exactly the same language, but statements are not necessarily truths. Again, as I had stood up to ask a question, which was refused, it is obvious there must be a disagreement between us; and as "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" cannot descend upon discord, he was illogical in closing the Service with the blessing which he knew must be negated. The Doctor might say, "The blessing was to the believers with myself;" but he has no right, with a publicly-invited audience, who came to listen to his argument, to assume that any one of the company agreed with him.

Yours respectfully,

F. WILSON.

[We print the above letter that we may say that it is not our mission to discuss Dr. Sexton, his Christianity, or the manner in which he conducts his meetings. If he pleases to erect a sectarian platform he has perfect liberty to do so, and if liberals do not like it they had better stop away. With such matters we have not the least concern. As a lecturer on Spiritualism we have afforded Dr. Sexton every help in our power, and it is only as such that he can be allowed a position in these columns, which are devoted to Spiritualism and progressive thought, and these alone. Christianity is a much more popular article than Spiritualism, but we need not be concerned at the establishment of an additional shop in the interests of that article. Rather let us look to our own affairs, and thereby call the attention of the public to a superior class of facts.—ED. *M.*]

As Mr. Wilson, who, by the way, is very regular in his attendance at my Services, had thoroughly misunderstood the line of argument I had adopted, and had taken this somewhat unusual mode of expressing his dissent from what he imagined to be my opinions, I sent the following letter in reply:—

To the Editor of the "Medium."

Dear Sir,—Mr. F. Wilson holds singular views, both as to the meaning of the word "Discourse" and also as to my right to conduct my meetings in my own way. Why his letter should have been sent to you, or why you should have inserted it I am at a loss to imagine, seeing that it had nothing to do with Spiritualism, or indeed with anything else that can possibly have any interest

for your readers. By the way, is Mr. Wilson a Spiritualist? I have never heard of him in connection with the movement, and only know of him as the advocate of views which are doubtless profound enough when one comes to understand them, but which I must confess are altogether beyond my limited capacity to comprehend. Mr. Wilson knew perfectly well when he came to the Cavendish Rooms on Sunday last that I did not allow discussion, and therefore, to say the least of it, it was not in good taste on his part to get up and attempt to speak, and thereby provoke what might have been a disturbance. I do not believe in having whatever impression I may have succeeded in making upon my hearers on a Sabbath evening destroyed by the garrulity of half-a-dozen loquacious individuals, whose chief ambition is to hear themselves talk. Not that I mean to class Mr. Wilson with these; but he knows as well as most men that if I allowed discussions and questions I should have a dozen such people present at every meeting. Let it not be inferred from this that I fear public controversy. I shall be happy to meet Mr. Wilson, or any other man living, to debate, at a proper time and in an appropriate place, any of the opinions which I am in the habit of enunciating. My Sundays I devote to a different, and according to my view, to a much higher purpose.

Mr. Wilson has completely misunderstood my meaning in speaking of the shipwreck. I did not quote it as "a disproof of God's goodness." Assuredly nothing could have been farther from my intention. I referred to it as one instance out of many in which the loving purpose of the Divine Father could not be seen without the key which Christianity furnished to unlock the mystery. The declaration of Jesus, "I am the way," &c., needed not on that occasion to be subjected to the test of an investigation into His authority thus to speak, because I had already discussed that question in an exhaustive manner in four previous Discourses. Mr. Wilson will pardon me for still using this term, since I have looked into half-a-dozen dictionaries and failed to find in any one of them any sanction for the peculiar meaning which he gives to the word Discourse.

In reference to your own remarks, Mr. Editor, I have not erected "a sectarian platform," but simply secured a place in which to advocate what appears to me to be the truth. There is no more sectarianism in my views than in yours, or in those of any one else. We all teach what we believe to be true and unless we are intolerant towards others—which I sincerely trust I am not—there is no sectarianism in so doing. Christian Spiritualism is one phase of the great Spiritual Movement, what is termed Progressive Spiritualism is another, the Re-incarnation doctrine is a third, and I might name half-a-dozen others. If it were worth while to make a comparison between these, which it certainly is not, we should perhaps discover that Christian Spiritualism was the least sectarian of them all. I challenge any man in the Spiritual Movement to show broader sympathies than I have always displayed. I have worked harmoniously with each party and with every individual, and have no intention of ever doing otherwise. Spiritualism is of itself a sufficient basis of union for spiritualistic work, but assuredly beyond that I may be allowed to entertain and advocate such views as may appear to me to be true. I know well enough that spirits themselves differ upon questions of religion as they do upon almost every other topic, and I consequently use my own judgment as to how much of their teaching I shall accept. Should a spirit tell me to smoke tobacco or drink alcohol—and I have known such cases—I should disregard his advice, as you would also do, I have no doubt. And I do not see that there is any sectarianism in taking such a course. In the same way, if a spirit tells me that Christ was simply an illustrious man or a great medium, I pay no heed to his teaching, because to me this expresses altogether erroneous views regarding a Being whom the New Testament describes in far different terms.

Apologising for this long letter, which I should not have written but for the remarks which you as Editor appended to Mr. Wilson's communication,

I am, dear Sir, yours fraternally,

London, October 16th, 1875.

GEORGE SEXTON.

This letter appeared in the *Medium* of the 22nd ult., appended to it however was a column and a half of editorial

comments, the principal points of which may be gathered from the following letter which I sent in reply :—

To the Editor of the "Medium."

Dear Sir,—It is not my intention to occupy your space with anything like a lengthy communication; but the extended remarks which you as editor appended last week to my letter, call for two or three observations which I trust you will allow me to make. And first with regard to the difference between yourself and Mr. Young. I took no part in the quarrel, and up to the present time have expressed no opinion respecting it. It is, therefore, utterly incorrect to say that I "re-echoed, in a gush of rhetoric, the bullying threat." How you can have fallen into such an error I am thoroughly at a loss to imagine. I have looked carefully through the *Christian Spiritualist*, and I find but one reference to the matter at all after the paper passed into my hands, and that is in a small paragraph in the very first number that I edited, which paragraph was written by Mr. Young himself, and not by me; and, moreover, certainly does not re-echo the threat of the *argumentum baculinum*.

With regard to the matter of Sectarianism, I repeat I am no more sectarian in my views of Spiritualism than other people, yourself included. If the definition of Progressive Spiritualism which you have now given be correct, then of course we are all Progressive Spiritualists, since I suppose there is no individual who believes in spirit-communication at all, who has not at some time or other obtained some new thought or additional information through spirit-agency. But no man knows better than yourself that this is not what is usually meant by the term "progressive" when applied to Spiritualism. The Progressive Spiritualists, both in this country and in America, are Spiritualists who are understood to be in antagonism with Christianity. Your statement that Re-incarnation forms no part of Spiritualism is, to say the least of it, curious. The Spiritualists in France and Germany are almost to a man Re-incarnationists, and this doctrine forms the most essential feature in all the spirit-teaching they receive.

The whole thing, however, resolves itself into a very small compass. Spiritualism *pur et simple*, I take it, means the possibility of holding communion with the so-called dead. Herein we are all agreed. This is, therefore, the broad platform on which we can all work in harmony with each other. Any step, however, beyond this, involves spirit-teaching, and therein leads to a divergence of opinion. Spirit-communications are of a most contradictory character, for the obvious reason that spirits, like ourselves, differ in opinion upon every conceivable subject. Some of them are wise, others ignorant. From the former we may learn much; the teaching of the latter we justly treat with contempt. And this is the position, I suppose, which all Spiritualists take. I put the case as follows :—

1.—Does any living man accept all the teaching of all the spirits who communicate?

2.—If not, then some principle must guide him in making a selection.

3.—Does he not in making the selection thereby upon your principle lay himself open to the charge of Sectarianism?

I don't care one straw for the word Christian Spiritualist. By it I simply mean that I am a Christian *and* a Spiritualist. Your remarks about Authority are not very clear. I suppose we all accept Authority in some form or other by whatever name we may call it. The only question is as to the value to be attached to Authority. We repeatedly make statements on the authority of persons on whom we think we can rely, we quote books as authorities, the *Medium* itself is an authority from which large numbers of people quote statements which they have never had the means of verifying, nor is such verification in all cases necessary. Indeed what is your whole argument against Christian Spiritualism but the *Authority* of certain spirits who teach otherwise. Whether the New Testament be an Authority worth following or not is a question which this is not the place to discuss. With me it is, with you it may not be. I will just say, however, in reference to this subject that I should amazingly like to see the man to whom you refer who could accomplish the feat of knocking "Scriptural

authority into a cocked hat." More than twenty years' personal experience of sceptical teaching has made me tolerably well acquainted with all the arguments that have ever been used against the Bible. I think I may say without egotism that I am perfectly familiar with almost everything that has been written on this subject in any language. I know well the modern German authors who mostly originate sceptical theories, and their small English *confrères* who copy them. The man, however, who could knock the authority of the Bible into a "cocked hat" I have not seen. When you meet with him please refer him to me that we may discuss this question.

In conclusion, I again repeat that, as a Spiritualist, I am willing to work with all parties, and with every individual in the movement, and that not because I am a professional lecturer whose business it is to accept such engagements as fall in my way, as you seem to intimate; but because I believe the platform to be sufficiently broad to include all our differences. Beyond this, I have my own distinct opinions, which I cling to and teach, and as I allow to others the same liberty which I claim for myself—I am no Sectarian.

GEORGE SEXTON.

London, Oct. 25th, 1875.

On Sunday the 17th, I took up the subject of "Creation by Law and Creation by God," in which I described the precise value to be attached to the term Law in connection with the phenomena of nature, in contradistinction to the loose way in which the word is now generally employed. The audience was large and very appreciative.

I see, that in one of the Spiritual periodicals, the controversy has again turned up as to whether some notorious conjurors are or are not spirit-mediums. It is really a great pity that men standing high in the Spiritual ranks should lend themselves to the propagation of such absurd fallacies, thereby giving the jugglers an opportunity of boasting that even Spiritualists cannot distinguish between their tricks and the tricks of mediums, and causing young enquirers into the phenomena to relinquish the whole thing in disgust. I can assure all those who take any interest in this question, that all these recent tricks of the conjurors can be as easily performed, without any aid from spirits, as their former ones. More than two years ago, as every Spiritualist knows, I—assisted by my friend Mr. Ogan—exposed every trick of the conjurors which was then being performed in imitation of spiritual phenomena. I showed these tricks in different parts of the country, as well as in London, giving at the same time a full explanation of how they were done. A dozen or more of small conjurors, who learned the tricks entirely from my exposure, are performing them to-day in England and in the Colonies. The result was, as is well known, that all these tricks were more or less relinquished on the part of the more conspicuous members of the juggling fraternity, who, driven thus from their old strongholds, selected new ones. In some cases the recent tricks are an improvement upon those first performed; in other cases, they are of a much more simple character. In every instance, however, I am as competent to perform and ex-

pose the tricks of to-day as those of two years ago, subject to the same conditions under which the conjurors perform them. It will probably be asked, why I do not then devote myself publicly to this task? My reply shall be very simple, and very straightforward.—Because I cannot afford it. I have neither the time nor the money to devote to the purpose, and much of both would be required; and, to be plain, I have no inclination to embroil myself in a quarrel in which, judging by my experience of the past, I should get on the one hand neither thanks nor support, and on the other the vilest abuse which unscrupulous slanderers could resort to. My previous exploits of this character resulted in a pecuniary loss which I could very ill afford. I found, moreover, that there was such a disposition on the part of the public to prefer to remain mystified over tricks of this kind to having them explained, that they did not thank any one for opening their eyes respecting them. And the Spiritualists, in whose interest I was working, did not afford me that support which was necessary to enable me to carry out the scheme successfully. Worst of all, the juggling fraternity, with one or two honourable exceptions, are, as a rule, the most unscrupulous set of adventurers that ever drew breath. In my case they banded together for the sole purpose of blackening my reputation and ruining my character. They circulated lying slanders about me wherever they went; they sent anonymous letters to the leading people in the towns that I visited, full of the most atrocious falsehoods concerning my past life, some of which letters I have still in my possession. They circulated handbills surreptitiously, with no printer's name on them, and altogether they did me an amount of harm, which in point of loss of character is simply incalculable, and in loss of money has amounted to hundreds of pounds a year. Even of all this I should not have complained, seeing that I was labouring in a good cause, but for one fact, the cruellest of all and the hardest to bear. The Spiritualists in whose interest I was working, whose cause I was upholding and whose principles I was defending, not only did not afford me the requisite support, but in several cases have urged the scandalous and mendacious slanders promulgated by the conjurors as reasons for not helping me in my work. I should not have named this matter had the controversy about spirit-mediums and conjurors not again turned up, and having said so much, shall probably never again return to the subject. As a matter of common justice I will not close these remarks without saying that there is one striking exception to the description which I have given of the conjurors, the exception is Dr. Lynn, whose name I mention with the greatest possible pleasure, because I have found him to be not only a man of

culture and education, but, in every sense of the word, a gentleman.

Adverting again to my Sunday Services, I have just come across the following notice of them which appeared in a Leamington paper:—

A new champion for Christianity has arisen, and is now opposing himself every Sunday at Cavendish-rooms against the materialism of the age. I allude to Dr. Sexton; one of the most fluent lecturers of the platform, who was for some years associated with the husks of unbelief, has now turned to expose the fallacy of the conclusions he had previously submitted to, as being well conversant with science, having a retentive memory and a wide course of reading, he supports his arguments by illustrations that convince, or should convince, those who the more they enquire the less there is for them to practically believe. I have been several times to hear him, for I can fully echo the arguments, though I could not make them. He appears to me to be a person singularly useful to the Church in the present day, for the clergy, as a body, are not furnished with the arguments that lay outside the domain of directioned belief. For example, he sets Paley's argument of "The Watch" in its fair position as a proof of design, and cuts away the legs of the stool on which Darwin now stands, as the glory of the scientific Ephesians. This argument for a Divinity appears, as the Great First Cause, unanswerable, but he has not promulgated his defence for Christianity distinct from the belief in the Father of ALL. But even if you were not of his opinions, you would hear the propositions admirably supported, and in these days of slipshod acceptance of the just statement that is uppermost, a logical lecture is a refreshing exercise for the gratification of the attention. His ability is not confined to religious questions, and the Philosophical Society would do well to propose a subject for his handlement, as the range of his comprehension could throw an imposing light on any subject delivered in language that is always refined and logical, and with a delivery that does not know the meaning of hesitation.

On Sunday the 24th, the subject of my Evening's Discourse was "The Religion of Astronomy," in which I dealt with the support which Astronomy renders to Religion, and replied to a well-known objection based upon the science that is usually urged by soeptics against Christianity, and which Dr. Chalmers has dealt with in his celebrated Astronomical Discourses, but I think inadequately met. The congregation was large and very appreciative. Several members of the Christian Evidence Society were present, who at the close shook me warmly by the hand, and thanked me heartily for the great work I was doing.

The Editor of the *Spiritualist*, in his issue of the 22nd, has introduced a leading article, entitled "Is Evil a Reality?" in which he has dealt with that same illustration of mine of the thunder-storm at sea, and endeavoured to account for the existence of evil. The Editor of the *Spiritualist* would indeed be a great man could he in a few off-hand remarks, occupying a little over two columns of his paper, solve the most tremendous problem that has ever forced itself upon the attention of mankind, and about which the minds of the greatest men that ever lived have been puzzled and perplexed. His statement of my illustration is as follows:—

In Dr. Sexton's Discourse on "The Doctrine of a Final Cause," a report of

which was published in the last number of the *Spiritualist*, he argued that the examination and contemplation of the works of nature give no evidence that the Great First Cause thereof is a God of love. After eloquently describing a landscape, as seen from a mountain-side upon a summer's-day—a scene radiant with flowers and beauty, he pictured a storm at sea, in which, in the words of Mahomet—"Billows were riding upon billows below, and clouds above; one darkness on another darkness," lit up occasionally by the lightning's flash, accompanied by peal upon peal of heavenly artillery; and he told how a ship labouring in this storm, with five hundred living souls on board, was suddenly struck by lightning and all hands sent to the bottom, leaving wives and children to mourn their loss. In circumstances such as these, argued Dr. Sexton, man can gain no evidence from nature that God is a God of love.

To this he replies that electricity obeys fixed laws, that men should study those laws, get lightning conductors for their ships, and in other ways protect themselves against the effects of the tempest. My case, however, was not of a ship struck by lightning, but of a vessel dashed to pieces by the fury of the waves, in which case the lightning conductor would have proved of little service. A hundred illustrations, however, might be given, had we the space, in which no amount of precaution could prevent the disaster. Mr. Harrison then remarks:—

Dr. Sexton further assumes that drowning is a dire calamity. Is he so little of a Spiritualist as not to think it probable that most of the sufferers found themselves an hour afterwards in a happier state of existence than before.

I am by no means certain that the majority of men on entering the spirit-world find themselves in a happier state than before. The large mass of human beings must pass through some terrible ordeal hereafter, if they are ever to become thoroughly purified from sin and evil; but assuredly the argument that drowning is good, because the persons drowned are happier afterwards—if it leads anywhere would lead to a justification of suicide. Mr. Harrison knows, however, perfectly well—as he was present on the occasion of the delivery of the Discourse in question—that it was not of the drowned men that I spoke at all, but of the wives and families at home who depended on them for support. And these, if they were deprived of the belief in a loving Father in Heaven, who had promised that He would specially care for the widow and the orphan, would find in their distress but sorry comfort, and poor consolation in scientific twaddle about laws of nature and all that sort of thing. In several places in the article, Mr. Harrison seems to assume that I am arguing against the goodness of God, than which nothing could be possibly farther from my intention. I stated on the following Sunday in reference to the report of the Discourse which appeared in the *Spiritualist*, and also to the question mooted by Mr. Wilson in the *Medium*, that the infinite love of God was to me the most important fact in my existence that the knowledge of a kind and loving Father

in Heaven, whose tender mercies are over all His works, and who cares in an especial sense for the children of men, was a truth of more value to me than all the learning, all the science, all the culture, all the knowledge of all the ages. To suppose me, therefore, attempting to disprove the love of God is preposterous in the extreme. What I did maintain, and what I still hold to, is that this Infinite and Overwhelming Love, which more than compensates for all the ills in existence, I learned not from Nature but from the New Testament. Nature may illustrate and add force to the fact; the truth itself it could not have taught.

One point in Mr. Harrison's article I think I may justly complain of, which is that in stating that theological influence had in the past prevented scientific investigation, he speaks of me as "a mouth-piece" of this same obstructive theology. Now what purpose was to be served by making this statement, unless to damage me in the eyes of the Spiritualistic readers of his paper, I am at a loss to imagine. I have given up the greater part of my life to the study of science, and am as much devoted to its progress as any man living. I advocate no obstructions to its onward march. All that I ask is for it to keep within its own bounds and to cease dogmatising on questions that lie outside of its domain. It is an easy matter to talk glibly about obstructive theology, and priestcraft, and religious opposition to scientific investigation, but it amounts to very little after all. The most eminent scientific men who have ever lived, whose discoveries will shed a lustre over all future ages, have been not only believers in Christianity but men of sterling piety, leading devout and godly lives. And this same theology, despite the fact that it has been sometimes obstructive, has given birth to very many of the boasted advantages which we now enjoy—social and political—to say nothing of the perfect moral code which it has furnished.

TO "C. L. V. T." AND ALL SPIRITUALISTS.

SISTER, brother, we are gleaners
In the harvest-fields of Time;
Day by day the grain is rip'ning,
For the coming Spirit-clime.

Whether in the early morning,
Going forth with busy feet;
Or as weary toilers, resting,
In the midst of noon-day heat.

Then strive we all, with cheerful souls,
Each our duties to fulfil,
Till the time of harvest, subject
To Divine and holy will.

O, garner sweetest memories,
Bound with silver cords of love;
Deeds and words that light the pathway
To our blessed home above.

Doubting not such precious gleanings,
Emblems of each heart and hand,
Shall in golden sheaves be gather'd
To the brighter Spirit-land.

29, Erskine Street, Liverpool,
Sept. 12th, 1875.

WILLIAM HITCHMAN, M.D.

Notices of New Books.

DR. TRAVIS ON REFORM IN MAN AND SOCIETY.*

THE name of Dr. Travis is well known in connection with the principles of the late Robert Owen, more particularly that vexed question of the freedom of the will. Some years since he issued a work entitled *Moral Freedom Reconcilable with Causation*, which was very highly spoken of, and certainly displayed a great amount of thought upon this difficult question, although individually we are far from thinking that the Doctor solved the problem, which has puzzled philosophers for so many ages. The work that we have now before us has some bearing upon the same question, but deals more particularly with its application to society. There is very much in the book with which we heartily agree, although we have no faith in the regeneration of mankind by these sort of schemes. Still the book will amply repay perusal by those who take an interest in the well-being of society, and we have great pleasure in recommending it.

MR. S. C. HALL'S NEW WORK ON AN OLD SUBJECT.†

THE services which Mr. S. C. Hall has rendered to the cause of Temperance are incalculable. Not long since he issued a most instructive and valuable poem entitled "The Trial of Sir Jaspur," which had we believe an enormous circulation, and must therefore have done a very large amount of good, since both the sentiments contained in the poem and the engravings with which it was illustrated were admirably calculated to produce a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of all who perused the volume. Now we have another work of a similar character from the same able pen, also illustrated with engravings from several of the very first of living artists. We give the preface of the work entire, in order to enable our readers to form an idea of its contents.

The press is—almost universally—indefatigable in efforts to manifest the miseries incident to Intemperance: every journal of the kingdom is earnest in work for its diminution or suppression. The "time is not yet" when traffic in

* *Effectual Reform in Man and Society*. By HENRY TRAVIS, M.D. London: LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, & DYER.

† *An Old Story. A Temperance Tale in Verse*. By S. C. HALL, F.S.A., &c. London: VIRTUE, SPALDING & Co., 26, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row.

alcohol will be suspiciously and effectually restrained—or prohibited—by law. Meanwhile, it is counselled that PUBLIC OPINION must pioneer the way to legislative enactment: and a duty is inculcated on every writer to contribute aid towards a consummation that cannot fail to be mighty in its influence on human kind.

Thus exhorted—and especially stimulated by “a call” in the *Times* of the 9th of August, 1872—in this book and the book that preceded it, *The Trial of Sir Jaspar*, I have humbly striven to help on the work: trusting I may assist the many other “writers, talkers, preachers, workers,” to “abate this nuisance and scandal—our national drunkenness.”

I have tried to make this book broader and more comprehensive in details than its predecessor: to treat, indeed, as far as my knowledge extends, every phase of the “horrible vice,” adding notes from the “authorities” by whom I am principally guided.

Hitherto ART, to say the least, has seemed but an indifferent looker-on, while the contest is proceeding: a contest that has been described, and not by exaggeration, as a struggle between Heaven and Hell: the powers of darkness against the angels of light. Always remembering, however, that George Cruikshank, more than half a century ago, commenced a crusade against it—so picturing “the curse” as to have achieved an amount of good almost incalculable. Other artists have given help: notably John Tenniel, who, in the most popular of weekly periodicals, has been the frequent and powerful exponent of Intemperance.

From the position I have long held, I am enabled to bring Art to the aid of a cause that may be rightly termed “holy.” My thanks, the thanks of all Temperance advocates, the thanks of the public generally—it is scarcely too much to say the thanks of humanity—are therefore due to the twenty-six artists who have worked with me in order to exhibit the abhorrent vice in its hideous deformity, and the beauty and blessing—the rewards, physical, social, moral, temporal and eternal—of Temperance.

The book is like its predecessor written in the form of a poem, and consequently all the more likely to prove attractive to the public, and to produce a deep and lasting impression upon the mind of the reader. In addition to the poem itself, there will be found on each page a copious foot note, embodying some most important practical information, with reference to the drinking customs of society. The name of the author is a sufficient guarantee of the character of the book, without any recommendation from us. At the same time we cannot help saying that we have been charmed with the volume, and feel fully convinced that it will not only have a large circulation but will be productive of a vast amount of good.

DR. SEXTON ON THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY AS TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

THE substance of this small publication, which consists of a Discourse delivered by the Author in the course of his regular ministrations in the Cavendish Rooms, has already appeared in

* *The Doctrine of Immortality as Taught in the Old Testament.* A Discourse delivered in Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, London, W., on Sunday evening, July 11th, 1875. By GEORGE SEXTON, Ph. D., LL.D. London: SMART and ALLEN, London House Yard, Paternoster Row.

the pages of this Magazine, and our readers, therefore, will be familiar with its character. We may just remark that it is now issued in a separate form, and will, we think, supply a want that has long been felt by all those who value the teachings of the Old Testament.

We have also received the following publications—[American]: *Spiritual Magazine*, edited by the Rev. S. Watson, D.D. October.—*Spiritual Scientist* [Boston]: weekly.—*The Medical Eclectic*, devoted to Reformed Medicine, General Science and Literature, edited by Alexander Wilder, M.D., and Robert S. Newton, M.D., September. (This number contains a very excellent portrait of the late Professor George Bush, together with a short sketch of his life under the head of a review of his work on "Reasons for Embracing the Doctrines and Disclosures of Emanuel Swedenborg.")—*The Banner of Light* [Boston]: weekly.—*The Religio-Philosophical Journal* [Chicago]: weekly.—*Revue Spirite Journal d'Etudes Psychologiques*. Octobre.—*The Crusade*. October.—*The Harbinger of Light* [Melbourne]. August.—*Chicago Monthly Times*, devoted to the Interests of Eclectic Medicine and Surgery, edited by A. L. Clark, M.D., and H. D. Garrison, M.D. August.—*The St. Louis Eclectic Medical Journal*, edited by George H. Field. September.—*Psychische Studien Monatliche Zeitschrift vorzüglich der Untersuchung der wenig gekannten Phänomene des Seelenlebens gewidmet*. Herausgegeben und redigirt von Alexander Aksakow. October.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

CONVERSAZIONE TO WELCOME THE RETURN OF MR. MORSE.

WE learn with pleasure that a *Conversazione* will be held at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, on Wednesday, the 3rd instant, to welcome Mr. Morse on his return from America. The friends will assemble at 6-30. An hour will be allowed for refreshment, and the chair for the Public Meeting will be taken at 8 o'clock. Tickets of admission, 1s. 6d. each (four for 5s.); may be had of Miss Kislingbury, 38, Great Russell Street; Miss Everitt, Lilian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon; and of Mrs. Maltby, 8, Granville Terrace, Shaftesbury Road, Hammersmith. The profits will be given to Mr. Morse, and we hope, therefore, to see a large attendance.

CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The Annual Conference of the above Association will be held at 38, Great Russell Street, London, on the 4th and 5th instant, and will meet each day at three in the afternoon, and at 7.30 in the evening. Papers will be read upon a variety of interesting topics, including "The Moral Responsibility of Physical Mediums;" "The Importance of the Dissemination of

Spiritualism as a Religious Influence ;" "Healing Mediumship ;"
 "Re-incarnation : the Theories it involves, and the Evidence in
 support of it ;" "The Unreliability of Spirit-communications,
 and how far this arises from Ignorance, Carelessness, or Decep-
 tion ;" "The British National Association of Spiritualists—its
 Objects and Interests ;" "Popular Errors with regard to Spirit-
 ualism."

QUARTERLY CONCERT IN AID OF THE ORGAN FUND CONNECTED
 WITH DR. SEXTON'S CHURCH.

On Wednesday, September 28th, the first of this series of
 Concerts was held at the Cavendish Rooms. Several well-
 known ladies and gentlemen took part in the proceedings, there
 was a good audience, and everything passed off very har-
 moniously. The next Concert will be given on Wednesday,
 the 8th of December.

NEW AMERICAN WORK ON SPIRITUALISM.

Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten draws attention to the pro-
 posed issue of a new work on *Art Magic; or Mundane, Sub-
 Mundane, and Super-Mundane Spiritism*. The publication of
 the work is to be subjected to the following very extraordinary
 conditions :—

An European gentleman, now sojourning in the United States of America
 for a brief season, gives notice to all thinkers interested in spiritual existence,
 or occult science, that having spent 40 years in the practical and theoretical
 study of art magic, partly acquired in the East and West Indies, Egypt and
 Arabia, and partly studied out from rare and almost unattainable works in
 France, Germany, Bohemia, the British dominions, &c., he is now prepared to
 share the fruit of his labours and researches with a few interested and worthy
 students, and for this purpose he will publish a work under conditions which he
 cannot change or transgress; these are :—

"1st.—The work in question cannot become a marketable commodity, but
 may be exchanged for a ratio of the cost of publication.

"2nd.—The work may be published for limited distribution in any country
 where a sufficient number of students are found to ensure the cost of
 publication.

"3rd.—The requisite number of subscribers being obtained, a protective
 copyright is to prevent any further publication.

"4th.—The work is not to be published or sold by any professional firm,
 nor submitted for review to professional critics.

"5th.—After the requisite number of copies are drawn off to defray the
 expense of publication, the types, plates, vignettes, &c., are to be cancelled
 utterly."

These are the five conditions under which the publisher feels compelled
 to issue his work, and without the limitations of which it will never see the
 light. To these he adds the following stipulations of his own :—

He will give no name, token of identity, nor personal response of any kind
 to enquirers.

He will publish only through a friend. The friend selected has accepted the
 office of medium for the work, and is Emma Hardinge-Britten.

No firm can have copies of the work for sale, nor will it be issued until the exact number of subscribers are found to ensure the cost of the issue.

If published in the United States of America the cost will be \$2,500—which sum includes about \$1,000 required as disbursements to librarians and collectors of rare occult works, for permits to publish selected quotations.

To meet the actual cost of publication 500 subscribers are required at \$5 apiece, and, therefore, 500 copies alone will be issued, and from this standard of number and price there will be no charge or reduction.

The publication of the work in this or any country will not commence until the entire 500 subscribers are guaranteed.

This notice will only hold good during the ensuing three months, that is, up to the Christmas of this year.

All subscriptions are to be paid for only according to the custom of the country, C. O. D., but the promises of the subscribers are to be sent, with name and address, during the next three months, to the author's secretary, *pro tem.*, Emma Hardinge Britten, 206, West 38th Street, New York.

The work will be entitled *Art Magic; or Mundane, Sub-Mundane, and Super-Mundane Spiritism.*

This will be the first, and it is believed only publication in existence which will give an authentic and practical description of art magic, natural magic, Modern Spiritualism, the different orders of spirits in the Universe known to be related to, or in communication with man; together with directions for invoking controlling, and discharging spirits, and the uses and abuses, dangers and possibilities of magical art.

Signed for the author and publisher,

EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN, Secretary, *pro tem.*

Of course we know personally nothing whatever respecting the contents of the book; but appended to the circular is a testimonial from Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, in which she states that she has read, and as far as possible, authenticated its contents, and declares her "belief that it is the most wonderful and practical revelation of the subject treated on, and the only scientific explanation of occult powers in man and his planet ever given to the world." She moreover speaks of it as a work eminently calculated to afford to advanced thinkers—whatever may be meant by that term—a clue to the mysteries of Ancient and Modern Spiritualism.

FUNERAL REFORM.

At the Church Congress held during the past month at Stoke-on-Trent, Dr. Collis read a most admirable Paper on "Funeral Reform." The following brief summary will give our readers an idea of the changes in the present absurd custom recommended by the Reverend Doctor, with most of which we heartily agree.

He said that in the mournful ritual of the street there was not a single particle of Christian feeling, Christian emblem, or Christian hope. No one would know from our funerals whether we were conducting to the grave the body of a Greek or a Turk, a Red Indian or a Chinese, a Jew or an Infidel, a Mahomedan or a Christian. Did any one seeing it know whether they believed in Jesus or not, in a future state or not, in the immortality of the soul, or whether they had any faith in the Saviour God? Would any one tell them who invented this awful, distressing heart-rending ritual? It was not more than a

hundred years old. Why, then, keep it up as if it could claim a respectable antiquity? Would any man of common sense explain it to them? For instance, would any man of sense tell them what was the use of mutes, except that in funerals, as in grammar, they invariably suggested the accompaniment of liquids. What was the use of pages, except that they suggested pages of the ledger which they would have to pay for? Why should the horses be made such guys of? What did particular plumes mean? Why were certain of these carried by a page on a triangular tray? Would any one say why these funerals were so dismal? The funerals of to-day were as hideously ugly as they were a century ago. Was it not time to alter this intensely ugly custom? It extended from the house to the grave, and one of the consequences was a heavy fine upon families which could perhaps scarcely supply themselves with food. What they wanted was to Christianise funerals, and to cheapen them. The latter might be done by dropping many of the expenses of a funeral. Away with scarves, hatbands, unnecessary presents of gloves and silks; away with ostentatious crape. They wanted the crape to be confined to the arm of the gentleman, and to the body of the lady's dress. He suggested that the friends of the corpse should meet it at the entrance to the church, instead of at the house, which would avoid the unseemly feasting which often disgraced these occasions. He recommended walking funerals, which, among other advantages, encouraged women to be present. Those who followed the corpse should be dressed in simple ordinary mourning without streamers or weepers, hatbands or scarves. The use of flowers at funerals outside the palls ought to be encouraged. Another advantage of a walking funeral was that the rich and the poor were on a level. All distinctions had then passed away. He commended the example of the late Lord Derby and Charles Dickens in giving instructions in their wills that but a very small sum was to be spent on their funerals. Let them also abolish brick graves, which some had compared, and not inaptly, to underground pews. Dr. Collis went on to describe the object and operations of a funeral reform society at Stratford-on-Avon. He recommended the clergy to refuse to receive scarves and bands and gloves, and said their chief hope must be to educate the people to a better taste and a more hopeful Christian feeling. The brighter side of death must be dwelt upon.

SPENCERISM.

Mr. Bowne, a young American critic, whose analysis of Herbert Spencer's philosophy has attracted considerable attention, sums up his verdict as follows:—

I cannot agree with the popular estimate of Mr. Spencer. Comprehensive as is his scientific knowledge, he seems utterly unable to take a comprehensive view of the logical relations of a system. The most palpable contradictions nestle side by side in the most friendly fashion, constituting a kind of logical "happy family." "Yes" and "No" lay aside their ancient enmity, contradictions swear eternal friendship, and the true logical millennium is ushered in. Mr. Spencer has picked up the loose and ill-defined notions of popular science and popular metaphysics, and without stopping to analyse their contents, to say nothing of comparing them, he has proceeded to build, and the result is before us. A very little consideration would have sufficed to show that his psychology is fatal to rational science. A thoughtful criticism would have revealed the contradiction of his creative principles. One single, steady gaze into the fog of his argument would have shown the absence of everything but imagination. But the mania of system-building proves too strong for rational judgment, and the system bears abundant marks of having originated in a mania.

If it were not that the history of philosophy abounds in similar absurdities, it would be impossible to believe that Mr. Spencer is serious. The grandeur which is claimed for his system is entirely due to the factors with which it deals. Any discussion of solar systems, of infinite space, time and power, necessarily has an air of vastness about it which proves attractive. Mr. Spencer

has painted a big picture with a big brush, and the popular imagination, which finds it easier to wonder than to understand, will have it that he must be a great painter. Upon a sober survey it cannot be claimed that he has added much to our stock of knowledge. The associational doctrine has been expounded with far greater lucidity and far better logic. The same is true of cerebral psychology, while the gist of his argument in general is identical with that of Lucretius. He has merely combined facts which we knew before into a huge, fantastic, contradictory system, which hides its nakedness and emptiness, partly under the veil of an imposing terminology, and partly in the primeval fog. The doctrine began in a fog and never succeeded in getting out of it.

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN ON RE-INCARNATION.

The *Spiritual Scientist*, (Boston) of May 20th, contains the following able letter on Re-incarnation from the pen of Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten. As this absurd doctrine is spreading rapidly amongst Spiritualists we hope Mrs. Hardinge-Britten's protest against it may have a beneficial effect both in America and in this country:—

In compliance with the wishes of numerous of my own correspondents and your admiring readers, I ask the privilege of presenting a few thoughts on a subject which has of late been, like many other obnoxious and repulsive *side issues*—ruthlessly engrafted upon the pure and fruitful soil of Spiritualism. Excepting perhaps the infamy of what is popularly termed "Freelove," no other theory seems so irrelevant, and certainly none more fraught with baneful tendencies than that of which I write, namely, the doctrine styled "Re-incarnation."

It may be asked, what have any side issues to do with Spiritualism at all, and why should any irrelevant vagaries of modern idealism be foisted on the world as the outgrowth of the Spiritual Movement? To the latter question I reply,—because the side issues of which the earnest and thoughtful Spiritualist has the most cause to complain, have chiefly been promulgated by spiritual mediums, speakers, and writers, and hence, both within and without the ranks of Spiritualism their expression has naturally been identified with that of communion of spirits, which is authoritative only because it is based upon facts, but which may become as mischievous as any other fantastic creed or man-made dogma, when it is suffered to drift into the sphere of unsupported theory. To my apprehension, Spiritualism, in its strictest sense, is a demonstration of the soul's continued existence after death; a series of facts proving that under favourable circumstances the disembodied spirit can communicate with the embodied; the disclosure of an immense range of new powers common to the human soul in both spheres of existence and the opening up of a vast vista of glorious possibilities concerning that soul's future destiny, entirely at variance with man's preconceived opinions of the hereafter as derived from creedal faiths or theologic teachings.

That these sublime revealments—based as they are on stubborn facts, and verified by the experiences of the best minds of the age—must involve the most radical and momentous changes of opinion concerning human law and conduct, no analytical thinker can deny; but that they necessarily imply that those who have been privileged in their reception shall unhesitatingly discard all that they have previously deemed true and sacred, and forthwith accept all the wild schemes and disruptive propositions which fanaticism or licentiousness may think proper to announce as an "inspiration from the spirits," is an idea so transcendent of the modesty of nature and subversive of that order which has hitherto been regarded as heaven's first law, that it seems a duty devolving upon those who have hoped most from Spiritualism, laboured most faithfully in its behalf, and suffered most from the follies which have deformed its beauty and perverted its uses, to unite in the demand that its true nature and functions

shall be more carefully analyzed, and its true genius more thoroughly defined and understood.

Leaving other "side issues," however, for the present, and limiting my attention to that one which above all seems most calculated to shake the Spiritualistic theory to its very foundation, and substitute in its place a doctrine as doleful and repulsive as the theologic faith in a final heaven and hell, I turn to the subject of Re-incarnation, which however innoxious it might be when presented to the world as the dream of a speculative theorist, startles us out of our brightest hopes and fairest prospects, when it comes to us from the lives of those who claim to speak from the very self-same authority upon which our superstructure of spiritual faith is upreared.

Besides the voluminous writings of Allan Kardec, Miss Blackwell, and others claiming to be *media* for spirit-teachings in Europe, we have in America the utterances of some of Mrs. Conant's spirits in the *Banner of Light* communications, and last but not least, our much admired fellow-worker in the spiritual vineyard, Mrs. Cora Tappan.

Some twenty years ago, when Mrs. Tappan (then Cora Scott) became entranced, under the influence of spirits who manifested their claim to credence by an eloquence, power and wisdom, far beyond the young medium's capacity, she taught the doctrine of endless *spiritual* progression; the impossibility of any retrogression, and repeatedly declared in her inspired trance speeches, that there were various spheres of spiritual being, in which all the requirements of the human soul for reform, purification, and development, would be fully satisfied. Among a vast amount of spiritualistic literature now in my possession, I have an abundant record of this lady's past utterances, and in not one is to be found the least allusion to the doctrine of Re-incarnation, or any return of the soul to earth except in the character of a ministering and communicating spirit. Judging by the superior excellence and marvellous character of her earliest Addresses, these statements are fully as worthy of credit as those of her more mature years, and yet the latter wholly contradict the former, and that on a point so infinitely important as an item of religious belief, that I must be pardoned for citing them as startling illustrations of the shape in which this Re-incarnation theory is suddenly cropping up among us.

In some discourses given by Mrs. Tappan in London, within the last few months, the controlling intelligences announce the doctrine of Re-incarnation in the broadest sense. In one Address, of quite recent date, uttered in irregular rhymes, far inferior in style and tone to many of this lady's published poems, the speaker claims to be influenced by a spirit who alleges that he had first appeared on earth in the most ancient period of the Hindoo dynasty. After describing several consecutive "twelve births," in what we must infer were different forms of humanity, he proceeds to declare that he became an Egyptian, the one who planned and helped to build the Pyramids.

Then he appears as one of Egypt's Shepherd Kings, and, after another succession of births, is re-incarnated in the person of Saul, Israel's rebellious king.

More successions of "twelve births" follow, after which the wandering soul becomes a Jewish child, encountering and being blessed by Christ in Jerusalem; then a martyr to the Christian faith, then a Christian priest, then somebody else, and somebody else still; then Michael Angelo, busy in building St. Peter's at Rome; and after sundry other transmigrations, not clearly stated, he becomes a poet, and the author of those exquisite lines on God, so familiar to all readers of Spiritualistic literature, commencing,—

"O, Thou Eternal One, whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide,
Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight,
Thou only God, there is no God beside."

After sundry other wanderings—detailed in rhymes, which too surely prove that his poetic afflatus has not improved since the above quoted sublime lines were written—the text goes on to say that through all these long centuries of re-incarnation, the main object of the pilgrimage has been to discover his twin

soul, counterpart, or affinity; a final union with whom completes his destiny, resolves him into a fully perfected being, and henceforth he becomes a saviour and tutelary spirit to the human race. Now, if this remarkable Address were put forth as a mere poetical rhapsody, the hearers and readers thereof might accept it for its simple worth in a literary point of view; but, as I understand it, it is given as a statement of facts, on the authority of a spirit controlling Mrs. Tappan; and not only giving, through her lips, his own autobiography, but weaving it into a series of addresses preceding and succeeding it, all of which claim to teach, upon spiritual authority, the same doctrine of Re-incarnation.

If we are to lose our belief in the existence of the soul after death, upon the communion of spirits, and one of those methods of communion is trance-speaking, mark the dilemma which the acceptance or rejection of this one medium's utterances alone would place us in?

Either we must believe that Mrs. Tappan or her spirits are deceiving us. If the medium is false, whom can we trust? If the spirit, are we in any better plight? Allan Kardec is alleged by his admirers to be no less trustworthy than Mrs. Tappan. Miss Blackwell is equally regarded as a mediumistic oracle. If they are false; why are not all media the same? If the media are all unreliable, from whence comes our Spiritualism, and what becomes of our authority?

All our knowledge of spirit-life and being, all that we have learned or think we have learned, during the last eventful twenty-seven years, of what we have fondly deemed communion with the beloved ones gone before—depends for its acceptance on the integrity of the media through whom the communications are received, on the truthfulness of the beings who actually do communicate. There can be no half measure about this proposition; as on a careful review of the characteristics which mark spirit communion, since its first advent through the Rochester knockings, it is a simple impossibility to believe the mediums capable of originating all the immense mass and variety of test facts that have been given through them, often involving the private histories of thousands of persons with whom they could have had no acquaintance: either we must invalidate the authority of the communicating spirits, or come to the conclusion that we have not yet arrived at a sufficiently definite standard of truth in spiritual communion—that we are at fault in the matter of what to reject and what to accept, and we are too often priding ourselves upon having progressed beyond the A B C of our spiritual faith, when we have not in reality learned fairly how to recognize the A when we see it.

Apologists for contradictory communications are perpetually reminding us that the immense diversity of life, character, and condition in the spirit-world, like that upon our earth, is amply sufficient reason to account for contrariety in the communications. In matters of opinion and theory, even in descriptions of the spirit-life and land itself, this is certainly true; but when media undertake to give us consecutive biographies of the spirit speaking through them, and boldly proclaim their identity with divers of earth's deceased notables, are we to believe or disbelieve them—which?

If we disbelieve—the whole fabric of our faith, as built upon the integrity of our *media*, is shaken. If we accept—human individuality, identity, together with the whole realm of earthly loves, friendships, and ties of kindred melt into the illusion of a fleeting dream. There is nothing real, nothing permanent; self-consciousness itself is a myth. Every successive death is an annihilation; and instead of a long and shining list of immortal saints and philanthropists, poets and painters, martyrs and heroes—earth's history is made up of the biographies of a few wandering sprites who keep stretching out their histories through all time, and reproducing themselves under all manner of protean forms and circumstances.

The hapless believer in Re-incarnation can be as little sure of himself or his own identity, as his most intimate acquaintances are for him. He has not a chance to know who he is himself; who he was yesterday or who he will be to-morrow: and as to the precious ties of parentage, or the divine impulses of family love, kindred and friendship, they are all floating emotions to be blotted

out in the grave, and lost in new successions of new lives, new relationships, new deaths, and succeeding oblivions. The most remarkable and certainly not the least indefensible part of the Re-incarnationist's theory is, however, not only that they have no *facts* on which to ground their assertions, like the majority of their fellow-believers in Spiritualism, but that they infer there must be countless millions of spirits communicating through other channels who have no knowledge of Re-incarnation, and even emphatically deny its truth.

Can the controlling spirits of the Re-incarnationists be the only ones enlightened on such a stupendous item of the soul's destiny?—an item which if not common to all, must be known to all—and that in realms where such changes must be perpetually going on as would render ignorance of the subject impossible.

If we may trust other *media* as reliable as those whose authority we have cited, Michael Angelo has been just as busy in America as in London; and yet, when questioned on the subject by his American friends, he can only remember having been engaged in building the Pyramids and fighting the battles of the Israelites as King Saul, when he vaticinates through the lips of one medium in London. Were I disposed to treat this subject from a ridiculous rather than a serious stand-point, I should find food enough for my purpose, even in the hazy attempts at a theory put forth by the best defender of the doctrine—Allan Kardec himself. As it is, I only desire to remove this fungus from the pure and wholesome soil on which we as Spiritualists have upreared our beautiful temple of faith, so fraught with hope in eternal progression, eternal love, individuality and self-consciousness. It is with him alone, Mr. Editor, that I shall ask leave to offer a few more arguments on this subject in a future paper.

CIRCUMSTANCE AND CENTRESTANCE.

(*A Word to Secularists.*)

BIRTH, climate, circumstance, 'tis true
May make a Christian or a Jew,
A Pagan, or I know not what;
A Laplander or Hottentot.

Our instant action, mood of mind,
Like summer-clouds before the wind,
May drifting, change their shape and
course,

Driven by some impelling force.

But *nascitur non fit* applies
To both the foolish and the wise;
For our environment ne'er can
Create the powers that make us man.

We surely may be said to know it
Never made a man a poet;
Nor too, we safely may aver
Saint, hero, or philosopher.

The willow you may clip and bend
When young, to shape it to your end;
But all the skill you may invoke
Will never turn it to an oak.

The resolute determined will
Its own high purpose shall fulfil;
Nor—like a slave—obsequious wait,
For man is lord of his own fate.

All things, however hard they seem,
Continue possible to him
Who knows and dares, nor turns
aside

From passion, prejudice, or pride.

Yet favouring circumstance supplies
The means to educe what in us lies;
But let us not whate'er may chance,
Forget the power of centrestance.

T. S.

NOTE.—We have a lengthy letter in type from Signor Damiani, on the subject of Re-incarnation, which we regret has unavoidably got crowded out, together with some other important matter at the last moment. It shall appear in our next.—ED. S. M.